

midstream

A QUARTERLY JEWISH REVIEW

AUTUMN, 1961

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- JOEL CARMICHAEL • REUBEN AINSZTEIN • HARVEY SHAPIRO
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THE THEODOR HERZL FOUNDATION has been established as an educational agency to promote the study and discussion of problems confronting Jews in the world today. Two overwhelming changes in the context of our Jewish existence—on the one hand, the destruction of one-third of world Jewry, which has erased many political and cultural landmarks, and on the other, the rise of the State of Israel, which has opened broad new horizons—call for a reexamination of basic concepts and the ways to Jewish fulfillment. Equally grave and equally difficult to answer in traditional terms, are the fateful questions that face a world aghast at the threat of its own annihilation. It is against this background that MIDSTREAM, A Quarterly Jewish Review, has been conceived.

In sponsoring MIDSTREAM, a Zionist publication, we are committed, above all, to free inquiry. We conceive Zionism as, in essence, a questioning of the Jewish *status quo*, and as a steady confrontation of the problems of Jewish existence. It is our hope that MIDSTREAM will offer critical interpretation of the past, a searching examination of the present, and afford a medium for considered and independent opinion and for creative cultural expression.

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A Quarterly Jewish Review

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Autumn, 1961

Volume VII, No. 4

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MIDSTREAM—A Quarterly Jewish Review, is published quarterly by THE THEODOR HERZL FOUNDATION, INC., Board of Directors: EMANUEL NEUMANN, *Chairman*, ROSE L. HALPRIN, MAX KIRSCHBLUM, IRVING MILLER, LOUIS SEGAL, 515 Park Avenue, New York 22, New York. PL 2-0600. Subscriptions: \$4.00 a year; \$6.00 for two years. Canada and foreign 50¢ a year additional. Single copy \$1.00. Second class postage paid at New York 1, New York. Copyright © 1961 by THE THEODOR HERZL FOUNDATION, INC., All rights reserved. Indexed in Public Affairs Information Service.

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midstream

A Quarterly Jewish Review

MEIR GROSSMAN is a prominent journalist living in Israel.

Nasser Has Troubles

By **MEIR GROSSMAN**

EUROPE SWARMS with Arab agents. One sees them everywhere, especially in the capitals, but in all other important urban centers, too. The Arabs maintain bureaus, agencies and banks aside from the usual embassies and consulates. Since the number of Arab countries is considerable, their various representatives add up to quite a crowd. Their bearing is haughty, verging on arrogance. After all, do they not represent a great power that is regarded very seriously by both the East and West while they consider themselves neutralists! The big oil companies regard them as a power possessing great treasures and capable of causing much trouble if they do not have their way. The Arabs know this and utilize every platform for their purposes. In Geneva, Switzerland, which is the headquarters of many international bureaus and the scene of many worldwide conferences, Arab propaganda is deafening, and, as can be expected, it concentrates on generating hostility toward Jews and Israel.

At least this was so until the recent Syrian rebellion and Nasser's defeat. Ever since the Syrian secession, the faces of the multitudinous Arab representatives have become clouded with worry. Now, when they smile, they do so apologetically without a trace of the superciliousness of the past. Asked about conditions in the Arab countries, they reply vaguely and hint obscurely that the final act is still to come. Syria's secession from the United Arab Republic, they say, is the handiwork of "reactionaries and imperialists." It is only a little accident, they maintain, due to "oversight" on the part of Egypt's representatives, or, at worst, it was a result of inefficiency in carrying out the national objective. But soon, they reassure the questioner, the errors of the past will be remedied and the United Arab Republic will be resurrected.

Nevertheless, when speaking to Arab diplomats and representatives in Europe, one can not escape the conclusion that the breakup of the United Arab Republic stunned them and that their

spirits are not nearly as high as they would like the listeners to believe. And although the breakup of the United Arab Republic had nothing to do with Israel, the Arabs now speak less of foreign affairs and particularly of Israel. Their minds are occupied with more urgent worries: fear of an uprising within Egypt itself; the collapse of the pan-Arab front; the decline of Egypt's prestige in the Arab world; and finally, the difficult economic conditions in the Arab countries. Arab successes on the international scene in recent years had so intoxicated the rulers of Egypt that they seemed to have completely forgotten their solemn promises to improve the condition of the impoverished masses and to introduce far-reaching social reforms. The breakup of the United Arab Republic brought these problems to the fore again.

IT IS TO THE CREDIT of Nasser that after his first foolish reactions to the Syrian rebellion, when he threatened to use military measures, he retreated to a more intelligent line of defense. It is true that he continues to blame the rebellion on "reactionaries and imperialists," but at the same time he has taken public cognizance of his past mistakes. For a while, at least, he avoided repressive measures, knowing that these would inevitably lead to a debacle. He adopted the emotional tone of a forgiving Big Brother and promised the Syrians to redeem them in the long run by peaceful means. It was a smart maneuver which gained him a certain amount of approval in the outside world.

Nasser suddenly discovered that not only was he not a dominant force in the Arab world, but he was, in fact, virtually isolated. His dream of pan-Islamism faded away. He is in a state of mutual hostility with Iraq,

whose dictator, Kassem, has even greater aspirations than Nasser himself. Nasser discovered that Lebanon's love for him was at best lukewarm, although he was feared. King Hussein of Jordan was an avowed enemy. The North Africans disdained Egypt as not being truly Arabic. Saudi Arabia was too rich and independent to obey the dictates of Cairo. Other Arab countries, such as Yemen, lacked all influence and significance. And now came the Syrian secession which reduced Nasser to the *status quo* of some years ago. Even while authoritative sources in Cairo were still assuring newspapermen that Egypt would resist the recognition of Syria's independence, the new regime in Damascus was demonstratively recognized by both East and West as well as by other Arab states and neutral countries. In short, it was a great defeat for Nasser on all fronts.

In the meantime a host of economic troubles descended on Egypt: unemployment, decline in reserves of foreign currency, a low price on cotton in world markets, a diminishing likelihood of obtaining the promised long-term credits for continuing the construction of the Aswan dam, flight of foreign capital, etc. The Soviets played a trick on Nasser. They sold him weapons, not always of the best quality, in exchange for cotton and other raw materials which they are now dumping on the world market at reduced prices. This adversely affects Egyptian exports, and what at first seemed a favor to Egypt ended to its disadvantage. The temperature of Moscow's friendship has also declined. Soviet experts and engineers have been recalled. Moscow does not seem to think too highly of Egyptian neutralism.

The western block, too, has cooled off to Nasser. The character of his so-called neutralist politics, his speeches at Belgrade and his actions in the Congo

were outspokenly anti-western. Even the most naïve American officials have finally come to realize this and their affection has cooled off and become more cautious. Nor can Nasser count on the assistance of his neutralist friends who themselves stand with hands outstretched, some Eastward and some to America. It is one thing to call a conference in Belgrade and to deliver impassioned orations, and it is quite another matter to obtain necessary credits. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that Nasser has confessed to some errors and has embarked on a new revolution or, as he would have it, "the major phase of the revolution" which began with the expulsion of King Farouk.

For some weeks now, a campaign of expropriation has been in force in Egypt. Homes, businesses and private possessions are confiscated. People are arrested right and left. Nor are the arrests directed against persons linked to the old regime and therefore suspect. Anyone who has in the past failed to bow before Nasser's portrait or who possesses some wealth is subject to arrest. At first, Nasser nationalized large enterprises. Now his regime is taking over businesses and bank accounts at random. Numerous Jews who in the past evaded Nasser's iron fist with the help of bribery or influential connections are now among those expropriated.* In the language of Egypt's officialdom, this is defined as "the third phase of the national revolution" which

is supposed to lead to Socialism. Meanwhile the country is overwhelmed with confusion and panic.

HAVING SUFFERED such a defeat on the international and pan-Arab front, Nasser is now desperately trying to win the support of the impoverished Egyptian masses and to distract their attention from his defeats elsewhere. It is premature to tell what will be the effects of this policy internally, but in the international arena, this merely increased the growing distrust toward Egypt's ruler. As a natural consequence, although Israel is still attacked in propaganda speeches, Egyptian spokesmen have somewhat toned down their assaults. Internal troubles are too pressing to maintain the previous crescendo of verbal aggression.

On the international oil front, Arab nationalism likewise faces at this time a cheerless prospect. Both Iraq and Saudi Arabia are disgruntled with the Soviet Union because Moscow dumps its oil on the world market at low prices, thus undermining the Arab monopoly. Italy, too, has become a target of Arab dissatisfaction since it became an important channel for siphoning Soviet oil to western Europe. What has become of Soviet friendship? What has happened to Italian sympathies? the Arab oil-producing countries ask. The recent conference of Arab oil-producing countries, held in Europe, adopted sharp resolutions condemning Soviet competition which diminishes the income of the Arab countries. There were protests and threats of a sharp conflict in this area. But business is business, and the Soviet Union is a very practical establishment.

* An Associated Press dispatch from Cairo dated November 8th states: "The newspaper *Al Ahram* published yesterday a new list of 171 persons whose property has been seized by President Gamal Abdel Nasser's regime. Most of the names on the new list appeared to be Jewish. The property of 593 persons in Egypt now has been seized since Syria broke away from the United Arab Republic, Sept. 28."

IT IS NOT SURPRISING that Kassem's negotiations with the Iraq Petroleum Company are not going well. The Iraq Petroleum Company has taken a firm

stand which it will not relinquish without a struggle, and since the world oil market is glutted, it is not difficult to foretell the line of development and that Kassem's demands will be resisted more strongly than in the past. Were the situation different, Kassem could simply nationalize the oil wells and seize the property of all foreigners. But Kassem knows that Iraq lives on its income from the oil companies and that were he to nationalize the country's oil resources, he would be courting the fate of Mossadeq of Iran. All this has created a bad mood in Baghdad. Concerns and troubles on the home front diminish the appetite to pick a fight with Israel and to plan invasions in order "to save the Arab homeland."

Moreover, Iraq is secretly delighted at the sight of Nasser's discomfiture.

Even Hussein, the little king of backward Jordan, now dares to stand up to Nasser's so-called United Arab Republic which is no longer united and where personal dictatorship accompanied by expropriation pretends to be a republican regime.

Reports from Saudi Arabia relate that King Ibn Saud is enormously disturbed by Nasser's new policies, for if these were to represent pan-Arabism, both he and his little vassals who have grown wealthy from the income from their oil wells would face destruction. It may, therefore, be expected that the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Egypt will further deteriorate to a state of outright hostility.

THE "SECRET" of Arab influence in Washington and in London has long been known. Both Washington and London wish to avoid conflict with the Arab states because of their strategic geopolitical positions, their flirtations with Moscow and their possession

of oil wells. For these reasons, Arab strength was blown up to legendary proportions. Hence, these two capitals were ready to sacrifice the interests of Israel in exchange for Arab friendship. The oil lobbies in both Washington and London exploit every opportunity "to defend the Arabs against Israel."

Although we may not expect any sudden change in the policy of the oil interests, there is no doubt that Arab, and especially Egyptian, prestige and influence will diminish. An Arab frown is no longer so threatening, for the world is now witness to the weakness of their pretensions to unity and the superficiality of their regime. Nor will Nasser's new policy of "Arab Socialism" restore this influence — not even in Moscow. The entire world is witnessing the demise of a legend, as internal Arab squabbles, economic crises and the duplicity of their policies can no longer be concealed. Naturally, the recent developments are not the end of the line. More surprises are in store as Nasser's disappointment grows.

So far as Israel is concerned, it has every reason to be satisfied by these developments, not out of ill will for the Arab countries, but in the hope that they will come to their senses and face reality. In any case, they will, for a long time to come, be preoccupied with internal matters—a heartening situation. Some optimists maintain that now is the time to take steps to reach some understanding with the Arab countries, but this suggestion appears to be premature. Present Arab internal concerns are merely a stage in a long line of developments. Meantime, Israel must remain calm and wary, for Nasser's despair may possibly lead to a new aggression against Israel in an attempt to appease the anger of his masses. Precipitate action can only cause harm.

EUGENE LYONS is the author of *Assignment in Utopia*, *The Red Decade*, *Our Secret Allies*, *Stalin: Czar of All the Russians* and other books on Soviet Russia and Communism. He is now a senior editor of the *Reader's Digest*.

Russia's Megaton Poem

By EUGENE LYONS

IT IS A FAIR GUESS, from what we know of their mood, that young intellectuals in Moscow and Leningrad, Khar'kov and Saratov, are a lot more agitated these days by *Babi Yar*, a poem, than by Khrushchev's 50-megaton bomb. The nuclear monstrosity threatens only their lives, whereas the political fallout caused by the poem threatens their souls. And, even in the reign of Nikita, they are still Russians.

Babi Yar, a ravine outside Kiev, is the site of one of the most hideous Nazi atrocities in German-occupied Russia. There, in 1941, some 40,000 Jews were systematically machine-gunned and dumped into mass graves.

A gifted 28-year-old poet, Yevgeny Yevtushenko, coming recently upon the blood-fed ravine, was distressed that he found no memorial at the scene of the infamy. That indifference seemed to him an ugly symptom, a reminder that the evil of anti-Semitism stains the record of his country under the Soviets even as in the past.

So now there is a memorial which may well outlast any made of stone or metal—a pillar of poetry, made of passion and compassion, which Yevtushenko called simply *Babi Yar*. It was published in the Moscow *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, organ of the Union of Soviet Writers, on the eve of Yom Kippur,

September 19, perhaps to underline the element of confessional in the poem, the guilt of Russia which its author takes upon his own bowed shoulders.

He must have known, having been the target of official angers in the past, that *Babi Yar* would draw heavy fire from the commissars of culture. The editors, too, could not have been unaware that they might be caught in the fusillade. Apparently moral courage has not been wholly stamped out by four decades of terror. And the attacks came quickly enough.

The first was a long article in the Leningrad *Literatura i Zhizn*, by D. Starikov, which I have before me. Those that followed, we may be sure, adhered to the line laid out in the initial assault. The young poet is accused of standard crimes against Soviet society, such as petty bourgeois deviation, chauvinism and slander, with "political tactlessness" for good measure, and he is adjudged unworthy of membership in the communist community.

Babi Yar thereupon ballooned into a literary-political *cause célèbre*, the most significant since the excitement over Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*.

Now it happened that an officially designated event, Poetry Week, came in early October. As usual, thousands of enthusiasts, mostly young people, gath-

BABI YAR

[Translated from the Russian by Max Hayward]

There are no memorials over Babi
Yar—

The steep slope is the only grave-
stone.

I am afraid.

Today I am as old in years as the
Jewish people.

It seems to me now that I am a Jew.
And now, crucified on the cross, I die
And to this very day I bear the
marks of the nails.

It seems to me that I am Dreyfus.

The worthy citizenry denounces me
and judges me.

I am behind prison bars.

I am trapped, hunted, spat upon,
reviled!

And good ladies in dresses flounced
with Brussels lace

Shrieking, poke umbrellas in my face.

It seems to me that I am a boy in
Byelostok,

Blood flows and spreads across the
floor.

Reeking of onion and vodka,

The leading lights of the saloon bar
Are on the rampage.

Kicked aside by a boot, I am help-
less:

I plead with the pogrom thugs in
vain.

To roars of "Beat the Yids, and save
Russia"

A shopkeeper is beating up my
mother.

O my Russian people!

I know that you are really inter-
national

But those with unclean hands

Have often loudly taken in vain

Your most pure name.

I know how good is my native land

And how vile it is that, without a
quiver in their veins,

The antisemites styled themselves
with pomp

"The union of the Russian people"!

It seems to me that I am Anna Frank,
As frail as a twig in April.

And I am full of love

And I have no need of empty
phrases.

I want us to look at each other,

How little we can see or smell,

—Neither the leaves on the trees
nor the sky.

But we can do a lot.

We can tenderly embrace in a dark
room.

Someone is coming? Don't be afraid
—It is the noise of spring itself.

Come to me, give me your lips.

Someone is forcing the door?

—No, it is the breaking up of the
ice . . .

Wild grasses rustle over Babi Yar.

The trees look down sternly, like
judges.

Everything here shrieks silently

And, taking off my cap,

I feel how gradually I am turning
grey.

And I myself am nothing but a
silent shriek

Over the thousands of thousands
buried in this place.

I am every old man who was shot
here.

I am every boy who was shot here.

No part of me will ever forget any
of this!

Let the "Internationale" ring out

When the last antisemite on earth
is buried.

There is no Jewish blood in mine,

But I am hated by every antisemite
as a Jew,

And for this reason,

I am a true Russian!

ered in Moscow's Mayakovsky Square to listen to readings of published and unpublished poems. Yevtushenko was among the performers and was greeted with stormy applause and cheers, not entirely literary in their fervor.

To be sure, he read only his more conformist works. But one of them was *You Can Consider Me a Communist*, which contained a telltale line: "I will remain firm to the end and never become an unctuous bootlicker." The reception it received left no margins for doubt that those congregated thousands were all on the poet's side, and against the unctuous bootlickers who were belaboring him. Under the truce flag of literature, the Soviet capital thus witnessed what was in effect a political demonstration.

Abroad, the *Babi Yar* affair has been reported and commented upon solely as an aspect of the Jewish problem, as an indirect yet ambiguous admission that anti-Semitism continues to exist in Soviet Russia. But the episode cuts much deeper. It is another manifestation, I believe, of the deep-running ferment in the Soviet intelligentsia, especially its young contingents, under the policed surface of the monolithic arts.

Speaking out for the Jews, as against the government and pogrom hoodlums, is in the old tradition of Russian intellectuals. And so is sympathy for a non-conforming writer under official fire.

IN *Babi Yar*, though he has not a drop of Jewish blood in his veins, the poet declares himself a Jew, "as old as the Jewish people itself," sharing the Jews' humiliations and martyrdom. He identifies himself with Dreyfus and Anne Frank, with the victims of anti-Semitism through the millenia, in ancient Egypt, in modern Europe, and above all, in Russia itself.

He recalls with a shudder the blood spilled in pogroms. His countrymen today, he concedes, "are in essence internationalists," but "those whose hands are unclean" still soil the honor of Russia. "Let the 'Internationale' sound out joyously," he concludes—but only "when the last anti-Semite on earth will be buried."

In all this Comrade Starikov sees only the psychological stigmata of a petty bourgeois slanderer of the socialist fatherland. Did Yevtushenko, standing at Babi Yar, perhaps recall the crimes of fascism? Was it that he could not remain silent about "the hysterical howling of Western revenge-seekers"? Could it be that he was prompted to remind his new generation of the sacrifices and glory of their fathers who fought Hitler?

Nothing of the sort! Starikov exclaims. This Soviet litterateur found his theme in, of all things, anti-Semitism. At the graves of the murdered he thought only that they were Jews—this, for him, was the most important, the most shocking fact. How un-Soviet to "classify the dead according to their origin"!

Starikov begins his broadside with a batch of quotations from Russian writers during and after the war—Sholokhov, Ehrenburg, Alexei Tolstoy, Leonov, Fadeyev. They were all horrified by Nazi crimes, he points out, but not in particular by the fate of the Jews. Hitler also tormented and killed Russians, Ukrainians, Germans. Their emphasis therefore was not on the race of the victims but on the bestiality of the enemy. Why, then, must Yevtushenko focus his sympathy only on the Jews?

The argument, of course, is disingenuous. Had Slavs, rather than Jews, been subjected to special savagery, had they been destroyed by millions in gas chambers, is there any doubt that So-

viet writers would have concentrated their indignation on the obscenity? The truth is—as Yevtushenko and the young people who idolize him know or guess—that their silence on the unique ordeal of the Jews was due to the Stalinist anti-Semitic Party line of the period.

In any case, the fact that the poet sees in Babi Yar a symbol of anti-Semitism, rather than fascism, is his principal sin. It was raised to near-treason because of its timing, just before the 22nd Party Congress, at a time of sharpened world tensions and war dangers. "Political tactlessness."

Nowhere does Starikov forthrightly deny the existence of anti-Semitism. He denies the need to talk about it. He buries the whole issue in ritual rhetoric about the victories of the Leninist policy on nationalities. "The friendship of our peoples is today strong and monolithic"; Khrushchev's new Party Program promises to remove the remnants of prejudice; but this literary lunatic chooses this moment to babble about anti-Semitism!

"I'm not interested in Yevtushenko's good intentions," Starikov writes. "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." The sacred duty of a Soviet artist is to support the Party, to teach the working masses "internationalism and socialist patriotism." But our poet has apparently jettisoned communist ideology for petty bourgeois ideology and consequently can no longer pretend to be one of us.

TO GRASP the deeper implications of the *Babi Yar* scandal, one must recall a fairly recent passage in Soviet intellectual life. I refer to "the thaw" in the arts, from about late 1955 to early 1958, which has not been sufficiently understood abroad.

The outside world became aware of Ehrenburg's novel, *The Thaw*, that gave the period its name; Dudintsev's

Not By Bread Alone; finally, after the thaw had ended, Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*. Closer observers of the literary scene read with amazement, also, the two volumes of an anthology, *Literary Moscow*, crammed with uninhibited description and criticism of Soviet realities.

These, however, were only a small part of the vast surge of resentment against censorship and suppression on the one hand, high-pitched dedication to long outlawed values and virtues on the other. Writers, painters, composers seemed intoxicated by the new possibilities to express inner yearnings and, far from being thankful for the Kremlin's largesse, they clamored for "creative freedom" beyond the limits set by officialdom. The phenomenon, indeed, was remarkably like those that touched off full-blown rebellion in Poland and Hungary.

And it was essentially a youth movement—not prompted, that is to say, by nostalgia for the Russian past but by revulsion against the Soviet present, not "reactionary," therefore, but authentically revolutionary. The older writers and artists for the most part accepted the new freedoms with caution born of experience: what the dictators give today they may take back tomorrow. But the younger intellectuals broke through the bounds.

What followed was a veritable eruption of prose and even more so of poetry, some of it good and most of it atrocious, by teenagers and those in their early twenties. Only a fraction of it could be published or, for that matter, deserved publication. The rest was circulated in manuscript, read at open-air literary meetings and at solemn "evenings" in private homes. Mimeographed and hand-written little magazines appeared on secondary school and university campuses. Party stalwarts, come

to lecture students on the need for restraint, were often howled down.

The Kremlin, in starting the thaw, wanted to confirm its new moderation, its break with Stalinist oppression, and in the process allow youth to blow off some steam. Khrushchev and his confreres were conscious of the pressures building up under the lids of police control and took the calculated risk of providing some safety valves. They did not expect that the lids would be blown sky high, and what was revealed in the cauldrons must have sent chills down their spines.

FOR THE PERVERSIVE THEMES in the literary explosion were love, compassion, truth, justice, human dignity: the very feelings and ideas lampooned for forty years and proscribed for the new Soviet man. Clearly neither physical terror nor the mental terror of total indoctrination had uprooted these "bourgeois prejudices" from the heart and mind of Russia. Many of the products of this literary thaw, some smuggled out of the country, have been collected and published by Russian emigres. Their artistic merit is often dubious, but their testimony to the human spirit is beyond doubt.

"Without regrets for life, but to be truthful to the end," lines from a poem by Sergei Vasiliev, was the keynote of scores of poems. "There is no happiness without truth," wrote Yevtushenko. A dream of human relations purged of fears emerged: "A longing for the integrity of unfeigned opinion," as Semion Kirsanov put it, "for long-delayed bright and sunny meetings." The great craving for courage, the guilt over past funk, came into the open. To quote Kirsanov again: "A hunger for audacity of thought and sound and color . . ." No longer "to live as supplicants behind a silent door . . . discussion everywhere candid, frank and

open, free of secret whispering, 'This may lead to trouble'."

In Czarist times, rebels consoled themselves with a standard hope: "In Holy Russia, cocks are crowing, soon day will break in Holy Russia." The self-same hope now pulsed through the outpourings of the new generation of rebels.

The sense of impending daybreak, the aching hunger for light, was almost obsessive. The image of the rising sun, of darkness dispersed, runs through an astonishing number of the literary works. For the beleaguered rulers in the Kremlin the obvious implication—that Soviet Russia was steeped in Stygian darkness—must have been shocking.

Though Pasternak was not of their generation, the poem he called *Dawn* was being recited from memory by the awakened youth. "Now, as from a faint, I have awakened," it said in his gentle tone. And Leonid Martynov, shaping his song on the edge of dawn, said it would reveal "hollow, rotted logs / Like rubbish and like rusty junk / Loads of erroneous ideas / And piles of would-be axioms." In the breaking day, he said, "What lies, what wrongs will be discarded / Tomorrow and tomorrow night!" Yet all that deserves to live "Will then return of its own self at dawn."

In his poem *Morning*, Robert Rozhdestvensky voices compassion for the victims of darkness: "We want to look about us and remember / Those who did not last to bring their songs into the morning." In a novel by Veniamin Kaverin, *Quiet and Hope*, the heroine is a soul-searching bacteriologist who records in a diary the evil she despises. "And all this," she writes, "is only an interval, which stretched itself out like an anguished, endless night. But night never passes into night. It ends, and morning comes."

The loudest, and among the most talented voices of the thaw was that of Yevtushenko. To the young man in his *Station Winter* who seeks an answer, he says simply, "Love people." With eyes opened at last to the squalor long concealed by the night, he sees "The drunk sprawled out by the saloon / The quarrels of people queued up at the store / The beggars clomping wooden legs upon the stone . . ." What made Yevtushenko's poems, especially, banners for the discontented was their valor: "Not weakness, but great and glorious deeds my Russia is expecting from me." Also: "I am proud because they cannot break me down, or force me to my knees." Everyone knew who "they" were; vicariously his eager admirers shared the poet's audacity.

SUCH WAS THE THAW. It was a protest, almost a revolt, quite unlike what the Party bosses had expected. It had a dynamism, moreover, they feared to slow down too abruptly, and for a while they had to content themselves with polemics. The Party spokesmen in the arts (the same Starikov among them) hurled charges of bourgeois "liberalism" and "nihilism." K. Selinsky, for instance, warned the literary delinquents against replacing "socialist realism" with "human realism"; too many of them, he pointed out, were succumbing to "general democratic ideals and concepts"—obviously an alarming fall from grace.

After the distressing events in Poland, then Hungary, Khrushchev took personal charge of the counter-thaw. The Party had given young artists and some of their elders a degree of freedom but it would not tolerate anarchy. He appeared at a climactic meeting of the Union of Soviet Writers, where the younger writers were conspicuous by their absence.

"These people chafe under the leadership exercised by the Party and the government in the fields of literature and art," he complained, but discipline must and will be restored. Look at the dreadful things that their vaunted "creative freedom" had created in Budapest, he said. If our Hungarian comrades had shot a few of the ringleaders, the whole business would have ended. And should anything like that threaten our Soviet fatherland, he assured the assembly, "my hand will not tremble."

The threat of shooting proved to be effective literary criticism. It marked a crackdown on runaway creativity. Editors too tolerant of the "nihilism" were removed, old-style bureaucrats took their places. One after another the poets and novelists were compelled to confess their errors. Those campus magazines disappeared, in most cases along with their editors and contributors. Yevtushenko, even Yevtushenko, was "forced to his knees" in a poem regretting his more reckless ideas.

Khrushchev—presumably as a policy of prudence—stopped short of liquidating the more conspicuous of the rebellious breed. But by 1958 the thaw was over. The surfaces were again decorously covered with ice. Common sense is our guarantee, however, that the ferment is still there, bubbling, boiling, probing the ice for soft seams. Now and then it breaks through to the surface, as in *Babi Yar*.

Héretical brochures, hand-written or typewritten, are still being circulated. This we know because the Soviet press at intervals reports the conviction of the culprits by way of a warning. Politically off-color poems continue to be written and circulated in manuscript. A handful of them, indeed, have found their way into print in Poland and in non-communist countries. And occa-

sionally one of them, whether through the courage or the inattention of an editorial board, still gets published inside the Soviet Union.

Babi Yar is important not only as a confirmation of anti-Semitism in Nikita's realm but as a confirmation of the

continuing restiveness and soul-searching among the new Soviet intelligentsia. The phenomenon is clearly in the Russian revolutionary tradition. While it would be unwise to build too many hopes on it, we would be even unwiser to ignore its portents for the future.

PRAYER BEFORE MEALS IN A FRATERNITY HOUSE

By LARRY RUBIN

I don't see why I should be standing here
 Cupping my hand over my bare head
 In such an absurd and useless posture.
 Nobody pays attention to the words:
 They end with something like "Minnie Horowitz"—
 A mumbled incantation, an Eastern charm
 That brings the food out of the kitchen.
 An ancient rite, no doubt, but somehow unsuited
 To a table where your right hand pours
 Kool-Aid, while the left
 Becomes a yarmulka.
 It seems a kind of reflex, though: I never
 Could stand before a candled table, hearing
 Those garbled words, without feeling my hand fly up
 As if to cover some secret disgrace.
 The other brothers, too, respond as if
 Conditioned: for seven ritualized seconds the air
 Is cleared of anecdotes—only a hurried
 Monotone, as if they could not take
 The chance, and risk offending some dread dean
 Who might expel them. And so (like me) they shyly veil
 The nakedness of their skulls.

Regards to Odessa

By ISAAC BABEL

Gershkovich walked out of the police inspector's office with a heavy heart. A Jew had no right to be in this all-Russian city. He was warned that if he did not leave Orel with the first train, he would be deported with a police escort. But to leave now would mean losing the deal.

With a briefcase in his hand, lean and unhurried, he walked along the dark street. On the corner he was hailed by a tall woman.

"Come up, pet?"

Gershkovich raised his eyebrows, looked at her through his glinting glasses, thought for a moment, and answered with reserve:

"I will."

The woman took him under the arm. They turned around the corner.

"Where to? A hotel?"

"Your place," said Gershkovich. "For the night."

"That will cost three roubles, daddy."

"Two," said Gershkovich.

"Doesn't pay, daddy . . ."

They settled on two-fifty and went on.

The prostitute's room was small, clean, with torn curtains and a pink lamp.

When they came in, the woman removed her coat, unbuttoned her blouse, and winked.

"Eh," Gershkovich wrinkled his face, "what foolishness."

"You're a sore one, daddy."

She sat down on his lap.

"Some heft, knock wood," said Gershkovich, "I'll bet you weigh five poods?"

"Four, and thirty pounds."

She planted a long kiss on his graying cheek.

"Eh," Gershkovich wrinkled his face again. "I am tired, I want to sleep."

The prostitute got up. Her face turned nasty.

"You're a Jew?"

He looked at her through his glasses and said:

"No."

"Daddy," the prostitute said slowly, "this will cost you ten roubles."

He rose and walked toward the door.

"Five," said the woman.

ISAAC BABEL, the masterful Russian-Jewish writer, is widely known throughout the world for his brilliant stories of life in Odessa and his volume of stories, *Red Cavalry*. According to available information Babel died twenty years ago in a Soviet concentration camp in a manner still unknown. "Regards to Odessa," one of Babel's earliest stories, was first published in the magazine *Letopis*, edited by Maxim Gorky in 1916.

"Make the bed," the Jew said wearily, took off his jacket and looked for a place to hang it. "What's your name?"

"Margarita."

"Change the sheet, Margarita."

The bedstead was wide, with a soft feather bed.

Gershkovich undressed slowly, pulled off his white socks and wriggled his sweaty toes to relax them. Then he locked the door, put the key under the pillow and stretched out. Margarita yawned, unhurriedly removing her dress. She crossed her eyes, squeezed out a pimple on her shoulder, and began to braid her thin hair for the night.

"What's your name, daddy?"

"Eli, Elya Isaakovich."

"You're in business?"

"Such business . . ." Gershkovich answered vaguely.

Margarita blew out the night lamp and lay down.

"Knock wood," said Gershkovich. "You eat well."

Soon they fell asleep.

In the morning, bright sunshine flooded the room. Gershkovich awoke, dressed and went to the window.

"We have the sea, you have fields," he said. "It's nice."

"Where are you from?" asked Margarita.

"Odessa," Gershkovich answered. "The first city in the land, a fine city," and he smiled slyly.

"I see you like it everywhere," said Margarita.

"Guess I do," Gershkovich answered. "Every place is good, wherever there are people."

"What a fool," Margarita commented, raising herself in the bed. "People are rotten."

"No," said Gershkovich. "People are good. They were taught to think they're bad, and now they believe it."

Margarita thought for a moment and smiled.

"You're a strange bird," she said slowly, looking at him attentively. "Turn away. I'll dress."

Then they ate breakfast and drank tea. Gershkovich taught Margarita to butter her bread and top it with salami, arranging it in a special way.

"Try it. And incidentally, I must go now."

As he was leaving, Gershkovich said:

"Take three roubles, Margarita. Believe me, it's hard to earn a kopek."

Margarita smiled.

"You're a tough one. All right, make it three. Will you come in the evening?"

"I will."

In the evening Gershkovich brought supper—a herring, a bottle of beer, sausage and apples. Margarita wore a dark dress, buttoned to the neck. Over the food, they spoke about themselves.

"Fifty a month won't cover," said Margarita. "In this line, if you skimp on dress, you have no grub. Take out fifteen for the room, figure it yourself . . ."

"In Odessa," Gershkovich answered after a moment's thought, carefully cutting the herring into equal parts, "you get a room for ten roubles on the Moldavanka, fit for a king."

"And then, you can figure it yourself, with all the customers one never knows what trash will turn up. It's a job just keeping clear of drunks . . ."

"Everybody has his troubles," said Gershovich, and told her about his family, his business reverses, his son who was recently drafted into the army.

Margarita listened with her head on the table, her face attentive, quiet and thoughtful.

After supper, he took off his jacket and carefully wiped his glasses with a bit of cloth. Then he sat down at the small table, pulled over the lamp, and began to write business letters. Margarita washed her hair.

Gershovich wrote slowly, with concentration, occasionally raising his eyebrows and pausing to think as he dipped his pen, never forgetting to shake off the excess ink.

When he finished writing, he made Margarita sit down on his copying ledger.

"You're a lady of weight, touch wood. Sit down awhile, Margarita Prokofievna, sit down, if you please."

Gershovich smiled, his glasses glinted, and his eyes became shiny and small with laughter.

On the following day he was leaving Orel. Strolling along the platform a few minutes before the train's departure, Gershovich caught sight of Margarita, hurrying toward him with a small package in her hands. The package contained some turnovers, and there were oily stains on the paper.

Margarita's face was red, pathetic, her chest heaved from the fast walk.

"Regards to Odessa," she said, "regards . . ."

"Thanks," answered Gershovich. He took the cakes, raised his eyebrows, pondered on something, and hunched his shoulders.

The third bell rang. They held out their hands.

"Good-bye, Margarita Prokofievna."

"Good-bye, Elya Isaakovich."

Gershovich went into the car. The train started.

*Translated from the Russian
by MIRRA GINSBURG*



The following essay was published in England 116 years ago under the long title (as was customary at that time) "An Appeal on Behalf of the Jewish Nation in Connection with British Policy in the Levant." Anticipating the Balfour Declaration of 1917 by more than half a century, it is a remarkable document of lasting interest. The detailed description of the pitiful state of the Jews in Morocco at that time recalls, once again, that the situation of the Jews in Moslem countries throughout the centuries, although perhaps somewhat better than that prevailing in Christian Europe, was far from the idyll of brotherhood which Arab spokesmen would have us believe. The proposed plan for a Jewish settlement in Palestine under British control was almost prophetic, as later events demonstrated. The author's analysis about Russia of his day, that "she did not naturalize individuals but nations," was so penetrating that it remains true today.

EDWARD L. MITFORD, the author of this essay, was for many years a British colonial official in Ceylon, and belongs to a category of English officials of a former day who were marked by colorful adventurous personalities as well as by great devotion to humanitarian principles. For two years and ten months, from July 1839 to May 1842, he was "on the road" and traveled 7000 miles on horseback from Trieste to India through desert and mountains that were considered unsafe even for caravans, and a good part of this journey was accomplished alone.

We are indebted to Dr. Franz Kobler of Berkeley, California, the author of *The Vision Was There—A History of the British Movement for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine*, and to Dr. Raphael Patai for bringing this most interesting historical document to our attention.

A Time for Mighty Changes

By EDWARD L. MITFORD

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the writer of the following pages is three-fold.—First, to expose the injustice and cruelty which the Jewish nation still endures, especially at the hands of Mohammedans. Secondly, to appeal to the British people and the ministers of the British Empire, in their behalf. And thirdly, to point out how England may remedy the evils complained of, and at the same time very considerably promote the strength of her political position, and the prosperity of her colonial dependencies.

The direct religious question is avoided as much as possible, though at the sacrifice of much argument to be derived from the sacred records that might render his facts more interesting, his narrative more pathetic. He willingly foregoes all this, as irrelevant to his purpose. His object is not to excite the emotions, or stir up the passions, but to direct, he presumes not to determine, the mind and judgment.

The time seems, as it were, ripe for the accomplishment of mighty changes. The author, however, avows his impression, that whatever events may hap-

pen, they will be brought about by the apparent ordinary course of Providence. And of late years, all things have swept onward with such silent yet fearful velocity, that they might almost seem supernatural. It is that Great Britain may have the privilege of being the instrument of God's providence towards the Jewish nation, which has partly influenced the proposer of the following plan. It is recommended by the facts which he has had the opportunity of verifying. He has resided and traveled many years in the Levant, and the countries of Central Asia, and has everywhere met with this outcast race, who are spread over the habitable globe. Of the feasibility of the proposition which is here suggested, he now leaves the reader to form his own judgment and decision.

Colombo, March, 1845.

AN APPEAL, &c.

We look abroad into the world and we behold the nations of Europe in the enjoyment of all the blessings of civilization derivable from the wonderful advance of knowledge and science which of late years have been poured in, as it were, a flood upon the western portion of the globe. The natives of the East have derived reflected advantages from the same cause. There is an evident amelioration in their institutions. The spirit of peace more generally pervades the present races, and promises greater fruits of the same spirit to the rising generations, and they are in a great measure freed from the trammels of superstition and tyranny.

But while the British statesman freely offers the pledge of his nation's honor, and contributes her wealth to the utter eradication of slavery;—while England waves her protecting banner over the helpless and the oppressed both at home and abroad; there yet

remains one nation—one remarkable race of people—the Jews—towards whom the exercise of philanthropy would seem a crime;—whom no eye pities, and whose wretched condition is a stain upon the present age of the world, worthy only of the darkness, blindness, and inhumanity of the Middle Ages.

I am aware that much of the ill-feeling of former times against this hapless nation has been greatly effaced from English hearts, but much prejudice still exists even in enlightened England. In other countries of Europe this feeling amounts to positive hatred; but be it remembered, the Christian world despises this people for vices which have been fostered by itself; and it hates them for crimes which are the effects of its own heartless policy. Let not some arch-priest or Levite of selfishness passing by on the other side tell me that the curse of the Most High is on the Jewish race, and that to help them would be to contravene the purposes of God's providence. Was this not their cry, when, despite their hypocrisy, the nation arose as one man, and hurled from the height of the pure cliffs of Albion the iron shackles of the children of Ham, redeemed with the gold of its sons, into the everlasting depths of its native seas?

The curse of slavery was on the Negro, as the curse of oppression is on the Jew; but it was not considered a reason, because we could not entirely remove that curse, that we should not do our utmost to mitigate it, and at least wash *our* hands of its guilt. Judas was not innocent, although his Master must needs be betrayed, neither shall we be guiltless instruments in the oppression of our brethren, if we do not do our utmost to mitigate their sufferings;—of this, indeed, we have positive assurance; as well might the Samaritan have looked on his neighbour as suffer-

ing under the dispensations of Providence, and so excused himself, as we can plead their curse in extenuation of our uncharitableness and neglect of duty.

But besides the unanswerable arguments of humanity and Christian duty, we know not how far we may be the honoured instruments of the restoration of this people to their place among the nations. This subject has latterly been more forcibly impressed on my mind by the outrages perpetrated on the Jews of Mogadore consequent on its occupation by the French, who, however, were blameless of any participation in them.

I was connected with Mogadore and other parts of the dominions of Morocco for upwards of five years, and had thus an opportunity of becoming intimately acquainted with the state of the very large section of the Jewish people who are spread through its various towns. They are a very fine race, and are partly the descendants of those Jews who were banished by the Christian rulers of Europe from their several dominions, and forced to take refuge in the adjacent Mohammedan countries, where they enjoyed at least a precarious protection, preferable to the state of outlawry, in which they only possessed their lives in fear and trembling in Christian Europe.

It were needless to enter into the details of the atrocities practiced towards this unprotected nation in Spain and other countries of Europe for so many centuries. They are familiar to all: they stand forth dark monuments on the pages of history, as prominent as the massacres of Alva, the black deeds of the unholy inquisition, (with which, indeed, these were connected,) or the horrors of the French revolution; but it is not foreign to the subject to remark, in the way of warning, that the decline and downfall to its present

state of anarchy of the Spanish nation is easily and naturally traced, being mainly attributable (second only to the just retribution of Providence) to the persecution and banishment from her soil of this wealthy, intelligent, industrious, and unoffending race.

These outcasts of Europe flying for refuge to the Barbary shores, met and amalgamated with the stream of Israelitish wanderers from the eastward, who had escaped the torrent of Arab invasion and the proselytising sword of Mohammed; these indeed were only a remnant, as whole towns of Jews in the north of Africa were compelled to embrace Islamism. There is an instance of this in the city of Fez, whose inhabitants, and particularly the women, are celebrated for their beauty and fairness, which they derive from their Hebrew blood. They are stated by traditional history to have been all Jews, when the march of the conquering hordes spread desolation over these beautiful provinces, and this city embraced the alternative of apostacy to escape the sword.

In the towns of the empire of Morocco alone there are thirty thousand Jews, who enjoy, indeed, the same protection that their fathers enjoyed from the Moslem sultans, but no more—for the Moslem Arab is unchangeable and unprogressive.* The same waves of oppression roll over them now as formerly; their condition is not absolutely changed for the worse; though it is so, compared with the general amelioration around them. Their heaven is still brass and their earth iron.

Not blinded like the Spaniard, the Moor knows their value, and although he holds them in the direst bondage, he will not allow them to escape his grasp by leaving the country of their

* The Jews settled in all the Barbary states amount to 1,000,000.

oppressors. Morocco, while it is the nearest to Europe of any of the Barbary states, is the farthest removed from the influence of science and civilization, and a description of their position in this country will show, with slight modification, the position they hold in most Mohammedan states. Cowardice and avarice are inculcated into them with the first dawn of intellect: their spirit is broken even in childhood. Their children are the fairest and most lovely I have ever seen, their faces beaming with health and intelligence, and the independent spirit of the man strong and budding within them; but how soon does all this promise disappear under the training of their parents, whom stern necessity has taught that their only safety lies in the contempt of their rulers, which they therefore study to incur by the most abject servility. I have watched these children, and I know nothing more painful than to witness this crushing of the spirit of a child of noble and generous promise to suit the baseness of its future lot, except it be to see the father trembling at some incautious bursting forth of yet unseared feeling of childish independence in the presence of their masters; the consequence is, that their minds are warped to obloquy and degradation, and their features early mould themselves to the obliquity of their souls. Yet, under different treatment and a more fostering hand, they have still the latent qualities of the stock of which came Abraham and David, Joshua and the Asmoneans, and the apostles of Christ, who himself condescended in the flesh to be of this nation and people.

But let us look to the state of bondage of which this moral degradation is the fruit. This large body of Jews scattered through the empire of Morocco has in each town its separate

quarter walled in, at the gates of which a guard is stationed every night: they are forbidden to possess arms of any kind: they are compelled to wear a distinctive and degrading dress, the chief articles of which are a black felt cap and black shoes, and the latter must always be taken off and carried in the hand on passing a mosque, or other sacred building, a town-gate or the residence of any person of rank, and also before governors or persons in authority: they are not allowed to ride on horses; nor even on donkeys or mules, within towns or in sight of any mosque or sanctuary. They are obliged to do any work required of them by a Mussulman, and to bear the grossest abuse and insults without a murmur. Even the right of self-defence is taken from them, for if a Jew raises his hand against a Moor, although smarting under aggravated insults and even blows, the penalty is amputation of the offending member. A Moslem can enter a Jew's house and compel him to furnish whatever he may call for, whilst the owner of the house is too glad to buy his forbearance on such easy terms, and is fortunate if his women are not insulted and himself spurned. No compunction is felt in taking their lives, and such is the abject contempt in which they are held, that the Moors do not scruple to admit them to the apartments of their own females, and if this deviation from their usual jealous custom is noticed or remarked on, they tell you with an expression of surprise that "they are only Jews," implying that they do not look on them even as men.

The richer Jews are the bankers and agents of men of consequence, who are either alkaïds or officers of rank in the sultan's service, and invariably, when these men die, the unfortunate Jew who is their agent is mulcted in a large amount, under pretext that it was ow-

ing to the deceased, and at his death devolved on the government: the evidence of account-books and witnesses are equally laughed at and disregarded, and the unanswerable arguments of the bastinado, chains, and imprisonment, exercised on frames accustomed to luxury and ease, extort the gold, whether due or not, from their reluctant grasp.

One of the most diabolical means of oppression which is brought to bear on this condemned race, but of which fortunately the instances are comparatively few, arises primarily from the contempt with which they are regarded; their evidence being esteemed utterly worthless before the tribunal of the caadi against a Moslem, while the evidence of two Moslem witnesses (though often false) is sufficient to convict a Jew and subject him to the penalty of the grossest crimes. It will easily be perceived how this unlimited power can be applied to the purpose of avarice, sensuality, and religious bigotry, when taken in connection with the fact, that nothing more is required to make a Jew or Christian a Mohammedan by their law, than the deposition of two witnesses to the simple circumstance of their having pronounced the words, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the apostle of God." Against this testimony the protestations of the Jew are vain, and the penalty of recantation is burning at the stake. Although the instances, as I before mentioned, are few, this is too great a power not to be much too frequently used for the worst purposes; sometimes the threat is sufficient to gain the proposed end, but if that fails, false witnesses are employed, when the victim, who is generally wealthy, purchases immunity at a ruinous price, and the circumstance is hushed up; or if poor, which is seldom, he is obliged to conform to his new faith, hated by his

own people, and despised and always suspected by his adopted brethren.

Some cases are, however, attended by circumstances of a graver nature, and have a more tragical ending; one of them I will narrate, which took place while I was in that country, and with which I was therefore well acquainted. The individual sufferer was an interesting young Jewess of respectable family, residing at Tangier, and much is it to be regretted that our consul-general had not influence, or if he did possess any, that he did not exert it to avert the horrid catastrophe. This young creature was summoned before the tribunal of the caadi by two Moors who deposed to her having pronounced their confession of faith. This, however, she utterly denied, but, as before shown, in vain, and the caadi had no alternative, even had he possessed the inclination, but to decree her conformity to Islamism on pain of death.

I was never able to obtain correct information as to whether the witnesses were actuated by sinister motives, or whether the poor girl really did repeat the fatal words in jest. There is doubtless much friendly intercourse existing between the Jews and the better disposed Moors, in which gossip and jesting are sometimes carried beyond the verge of safety, considering the relative position of the parties. Again, in a scriptural language like the Arabic, in which the name of God so constantly occurs, there are many ejaculations repeatedly uttered by the Jews which approach very near to this formula, and might, therefore, be mistaken for it. Be this as it may, the affair was of too serious a nature to be passed over lightly by the Jewish community, who at least deserve the credit of uniting for mutual protection, where their national and religious integrity are concerned, and consequently every exertion

was made, but unsuccessfully, by influence and money, to crush it in the bud. It had, however, become too public not to reach the ears of Mulai Abderahman, to whose decision it was therefore referred, and the parties repaired to Fez for the purpose.

Whatever might have influenced her accusers, there could be no doubt of the motive of the sultan in enforcing the decree, which was, to obtain another plaything for his harem; in fact, so well known was his character in this respect, that from the moment of her being ordered to his presence, no one expected any other result—for few possibly imagined, nor did the sultan himself, that she would have courage to brave the alternative rather than abandon the faith of her fathers. Such, however, was the case. She was first sent to the Serail, where every means was employed to shake her constancy; threats, blandishments, and the most brilliant promises were tried by turns, and were equally unsuccessful. Even her relations were allowed to see her, to endeavour by their persuasions to divert her from her resolution; but with a firmness which against such assaults could have been the effect only of the deepest conviction, this young and noble creature held fast her integrity, and calmly chose a horrible though honourable death, to the enjoyment of an ignominious existence of shame and infamy.

The Jews came forward with offers of immense sums of money to save her, but her fate was irrevocably decided, and the only mercy the baffled tyrant could afford his young and innocent victim was, to allow of her being decapitated instead of being burnt alive. I had an account of the closing scene from an eye-witness, who was one of the guards at the execution, and although, as a body, there is nowhere a more dissolute set of irregular soldiery

than the Morocco Moors, yet he confessed to me that many of his vice-hardened companions could not restrain their tears, and that he himself could not look with dry eyes on a sight of such cold-blooded atrocity. This beautiful young creature was led out to where a pile ready for firing had been raised for her last couch:—her long dark hair flowing dishevelled over her shoulders, she looked around in vain for a heart and hand that could succour, though so many eyes pitied her:—for the last time she was offered—with the executioner and the pyre in all their terror before her—her life, on condition of being false to her God:—she only asked for a few minutes for prayer, after which her throat was cut by the executioner, according to the barbarous custom of the country, and her body consumed on the fire!!

Fellow countrymen! this is no Moorish romance, strained out of a heated imagination, to gratify the morbid taste of the fancy-cloyed novel reader;—there is here no painting or exaggeration to excite false sympathy, but a simple tale of naked, unvarnished, thrilling truth;—and I appeal to you whether such things ought to be in the present age—I appeal to you whether such things ought to be allowed in a country where British influence can be brought to bear in the most remote manner;—how much more, in a country close to our shores, and where it ought to be paramount! “We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear.”

It will scarcely be believed among us, that all this contumely and insult, along with the most precarious tenure of property and life, is called *protection*, and that for this so-called protection a heavy annual poll-tax is levied; yet such is the fact.

There is, however, another visitation to which this miserable race is subjected, more frightful, because more indiscriminate, affecting not only individuals, but the community; this is the periodical sack and plunder of their quarters whenever the reins of government are in the least degree relaxed, either owing to civil dissension, or the dread of foreign armaments. The Jews, from the nature of their occupations as bankers, merchants, and traders, attempt, possessed of no land, to accumulate large sums in bullion, and indulge their fondness for display by adorning their women with rude but most valuable jewellery. This naturally excites the cupidity of the Mussulman populace, and they anticipate with pleasure any disturbance that will give them an opportunity of plundering the Jewish quarter in the confusion. How often have I heard their ejaculatory wishes for such an event, and when it does happen, they whose especial duty is to guard the town, are the first to begin the plunder. On these occasions it assumes the appearance of an enemy's town taken by storm.

In the event of any European power threatening them with chastisement for outrages on its subjects, the coast towers are immediately filled with black soldiery, country Moors and Arabs, as reinforcements; these pay little regard or obedience to their chiefs or governors, and with the rabble of the town, are always meditating an onslaught on the Jewish quarter, under pretext that if the infidels obtained the victory, the Jews would rejoice at their disgrace and side with their enemies. Hence they anticipate their revenge while the poor Hebrews are still in their power. With such prospects around them, it may be supposed in what constant terror this unfortunate race possess their lives, and with what alarm they contemplate the possibility of civil disturbance, or the

approach of foreign enemies. Although often threatened, an interval of many years had elapsed since the last pillage of the quarter of the Jews at Mogadore, which, I believe, occurred during the confusion consequent upon the death of the late and the accession of the present sultan, (but of this I am not certain,) until the attack on the town by the French, when the Moors, smarting under their chastisement, gave vent to their fury on the defenceless Jews. The mind recoils with horror from the contemplation of the subsequent occurrences, aggravated as they were by the peculiar circumstance of the helplessness of their victims; we would therefore draw a veil over that which words can but faintly pourtray, and at which the best feelings of our nature revolt.

Eminently blessed as we ourselves are by the mercy of God, it is difficult, nay, almost impossible for us to realise a state of abasement so helpless, of degradation so extreme, of civil destitution so complete, as that to which this outcast people is reduced. We would rather believe that the statements are overdrawn than that such things exist at this late period of the Christian Era. By cavilling at undeniable facts, we endeavour to shake off the fearful responsibility which they necessarily entail in our species.

If it be contended that the duty incumbent upon us to attempt a remedy of this crying evil, is not a consequence of such conviction, let any free man, by a concentrated effort of abstraction of mind, (and it requires an effort,) place himself in the position of one of these outlaws of earth, and if he do not abandon his argument I will not maintain their cause; but if, in this position, his flesh creep with horror, and his blood boil with indignation at being stripped of his liberty and of everything which makes life dear to man, and surrounded on all sides by in-

sult, contumely, and wrong, which it requires long training in servitude to endure with a show of patience; if he can then identify within himself the claim which this oppressed race has on his attention, his influence, and his exertions, I call upon him by his gratitude for the great blessing he has received through the Jews; I call upon him for the sake of his own unoutraged domestic feelings, by his sympathy for the oppressed, and by every cherished feeling as a man, a free man, and above all a Christian man, to give me his aid in advocating the cause of these outcasts of Israel, and soliciting for them the beneficence of that nation whose soil gives freedom to the slave, and at the same time affords an asylum to kings in their misfortunes—whose protecting sceptre rules with justice unparalleled over an empire which girds the earth, yet with the inconsistency of every thing human, where there is the greatest claim on their protection, there, alas! there is no help—at the foot of the British throne, where all nations find hope and succour, must the Israelite alone find neglect and despair?

I shall now naturally be called upon, and justly called upon, to point out some practicable means of compassing the object I am so desirous of attaining. But before I develope the plan I have in view, and which will take time for its accomplishment, I would purpose, as a preliminary, that British influence should be exerted to ameliorate, in some degree, the actual state of the Jews in every part of the world to which it can be effectually extended. As respects Morocco, no time could be better chosen for the purpose than the present. The sultan and his Moslem subjects are more humbled into a due appreciation of the power of Christian states by the retribution lately inflicted upon them by the French. However this may have tended to endanger the

peaceful relations of Europe, and have been looked on with a jealous eye in England, it was justly incurred by a long course of accumulated wrong and insult, not only towards the French themselves, but towards every nation of Christendom,* whose flag they have insulted, and whose power they have defied. Let it, therefore, now be known among them, that England takes an interest in the welfare of this nation; and though it may excite their surprise, it will arrest their attention and induce their forbearance.

That there is a disposition on the part of our Government, to answer every appeal in favour of the unprotected and the wronged, there can be no doubt; and I turn with complacency to the noble stand made by our ministers on the late occasion of the executions in Turkey of Christian apostates from Islamism, when with undaunted magnanimity the British Government pledged its integrity and perilled the peace of Europe on the event—and succeeded; how could it fail?—in gaining their point, though wrested from the Turks at the sacrifice of the fundamental doctrines of Islamism.

By interfering in their behalf, and thus gradually giving ease to the galling yoke of Mohammedan bondage under which they groan, we may bring out the peculiar constitutional elasticity of the Jewish temperament, and prepare them without premature haste and without fear of the sudden revulsion which would be the effect of more decided measures, for their eventual deliverance from the hand of their cap-

* Will it be believed that up to this time, Sweden and Denmark paid an annual tribute in hard cash to this despicable state, and the large presents constantly sent them by the English Government were also looked on by them in the same light. It cannot, therefore, be wondered at, that their pride was inflated and their insolence unbounded.

tivity, and the full enjoyment of freedom and independence.

I have alluded more particularly, in this imperfect sketch, to the Jews of Morocco, because they are essentially the most ill-used, and because—although I have had opportunities of seeing much of this people in that country as well as in Turkey, Syria, Palestine, India, and Arabia; I consider them physically and intellectually as the finest type of the race, and their apparent moral degradation is chiefly superficial, the consequence of the state of oppression which has been weighing on them for nearly two thousand years. I am prepared, in advocating their cause, for the smile of incredulity and the scoff of ridicule from those who form their opinion of the Hebrew people from the denizens of Monmouth Street, and who might, with equal justice, derive materials for their estimate of the British character from the inhabitants of the collieries or the purlieus of St Giles's. They cannot believe that any good qualities can pertain to this proscribed and despised nation; and yet, in a late publication, some startling facts are collected, and combined, and assisted by much conjecture, to prove that the Anglo-Saxons are of the Israelitish stock and origin. Were the proofs of this more unanswerable, it would not be matter of regret, but the contrary, as there is nothing derogatory in partaking in the noblest blood in the world, and it would moreover be of great service in abrogating those prejudices which are the greatest obstacles to any effort being made to relieve this people from their present unfortunate position. Is it not, indeed, surprising, that after the ordeal they have undergone, they should still retain either moral worth or physical identity; yet notwithstanding this, which would have utterly annihilated any race not equally the care of Provi-

dence, there are still among them men of latent talent and capability for the highest purposes, and which only require directing into the right channels to produce the most brilliant results. They possess in an eminent degree the virtues of fortitude and perseverance, without which indeed they could scarcely have existed individually or held together as a nation. Their aspirations after better things have been quelled, their spirit bowed to the very dust, and their every feeling embittered under the thralldom of Mohammedan despotism, the persecution of the powers of Christendom, and the insults of the world at large. But relieved from these fetters, the intrinsic nobility of their nature would be drawn forth, and springing with their characteristic buoyancy from the sufferings of ages, they would reach and maintain a high rank among the nations of the earth.

The plan I would now propose, is, first, the re-establishment of the Jewish nation in Palestine as a protected state, under the guardianship of Great Britain, during a period to be regulated by their advances towards the present state of knowledge and enlightened civilization. Secondly, their final establishment, as an independent state, whensoever the parent institutions shall have acquired sufficient force and vigour to allow of this tutelage being withdrawn, and the national character shall be sufficiently developed, and the national spirit sufficiently recovered from its depression to allow of their governing themselves.

This proposition will hardly be considered visionary, while it would be highly beneficial to the Jewish people, and would be attended with political advantages of incalculable importance to Great Britain, tending to restore the balance of her power in the Levant, and giving her the command of a free

and uninterrupted communication with her Eastern possessions.

In the consideration of a subject of this nature, it is impossible to lose sight of the position of Russia in the Levant, or to be blind to the quiet encroaching policy of our now friendly ally. She does not colonise but absorbs—she does not naturalise individuals, but nations. Let us take a retrospective glance—Poland, Ingria, Livonia, Courland, Krim, Tartary, Kabarda, Mingrelia, are Russian. She has absorbed Finland, Bessarabia, Inneritia, and the territory from the shores of the Caspian, (to the whole of which sea she asserts her right,) to the frontiers of China; but what more regards our present subject is, that after overflowing and Russianising Georgia, she has passed the river Aras and confidently anticipates the annexation of the rich countries of Asia Minor, part of which (Armenia) she overran and retired from; the state of her relations, with the great powers of Europe not allowing the consummation of so daring a step. On the other hand, we have France in Algeria, and I do not hesitate to assert, that in the event of anything arising to disturb the present peaceful aspect of affairs, our communication with India, China, &c., is not safe for a *single day*. On what does its supposed safety depend? The good will of a worn-out old man. It may possibly be his successor's interest or policy to continue the same friendly dispositions; but such friendship is very precarious, and always bestowed by these mercenary states on the strongest in any struggle. Can we trust to Turkey? It cannot protect itself, and is crumbling to ruin from foundation to battlement. It is unworthy of a power like Great Britain, on whose vigour and integrity the peace and happiness of so many nations, and the very existence of some, depends, to allow of one of the most vital arteries of her system re-

maining unprotected from enemies, or at the mercy of doubtful friends. When foreign influence in Egypt on a late occasion, attempted to tamper with this essential spring of her strength, it caused a thrill of alarm and indignation throughout her empire. No, we must have our own protection in our own hands, and we could not employ better means for securing this object, than the instrumentality of a people of sufficient abilities to act under good counsels, and united among themselves by every tie of religion, patriotism, and nationality. The re-establishment of the Jewish nation in Palestine under British protection, would retrieve our affairs in the Levant, and place us in a commanding position from whence to check the progress of encroachment, to overawe open enemies, and if necessary, to repel their advance; at the same time that it would place the management of our steam communication entirely in, our own hands.

There would probably be little difficulty in negotiating a treaty with Turkey for the cession of the territory required for the purpose; but should there be any objection on their part, the advantages which would accrue to *all parties*, are so great, and the importance of the measure to the interests of civilization and humanity is so immense, that we should be prepared, even in common justice, to take possession of it for the proposed object at once. The boundaries of the land can only, at present, be laid down by approximation, but the most advantageous limits should be the result of special observation and ulterior inquiry. It does not appear necessary, however, that it should extend towards the North, far beyond the town of Acre, the limit being a line drawn from the vicinity of the waters of Merom to the sea coast. With the fortress of Acre

open to succours from sea, this frontier would be impregnable. The boundary on the East should be a line on the eastern bank of the Jordan; the lake of Tiberias and the Dead Sea. It would be requisite to establish a chain of small forts or blockhouses on the whole of this line; they should occupy commanding situations to keep in check the various tribes of predatory Arabs, with whom no alliance would be of any validity or duration, unless backed by power at hand to chastise its infraction, or unless their forbearance was purchased. But such a course is at all times dishonourable, and I have witnessed so much of the ruinous effects of this system in Affghanistan, that I would ever deprecate a recurrence to it.

The southern boundary it is not easy to define, without personal inspection, as it must border on the desert. But the western, besides the Mediterranean, should be continued by a line from the sea coast to the head of the Gulf of Suez. The possession of Suez would be immaterial, as a station equally eligible might be easily found on the eastern shore of the gulf, as an emporium and resort for the Indian steamers, the more so, as Suez obtains its supply of water from the east coast. As soon as an advantageous position can be fixed on for a corresponding seaport in the Mediterranean, either at El Arish, Gaza, Jaffa, or elsewhere, the whole of the European steamers should be removed from the present inconvenient port of Alexandria, and no time should be lost in running a railway between the two stations, pending which the communications could be carried on by the ordinary means.

Let us only contemplate for a moment the confusion of our affairs consequent upon the breaking up of our transit arrangements through Egypt, a contingency which may happen at any day or any hour, and we shall be con-

vinced that this indispensable link is still wanting to the chain of Great Britain's power as well as safety.

The question here arises, How are the present possessors of this country to be disposed of? If the people settled within these boundaries were of the sedentary nature of Europeans, or possessed any feeling of attachment to the soil, I acknowledge this would offer some difficulty; but when we consider that they are Arabs and Turks, races essentially nomadic and migratory, the difficulties disappear. During the supremacy of Mohammed Ali in Palestine, the Arab had almost everywhere superseded the Turkish race, now, probably, (for I have not visited these countries since they were restored to the Porte,) the Turks may again be resuming the preponderance, for the two people do not coalesce, a lasting antipathy subsisting between them. The country, compared with its extent, is at present thinly populated, yet the pressure caused by the introduction of so large a body of strangers upon the actual inhabitants, might be attended with injurious results. Before, however, attempting to make a settlement, it would be desirable that the country should be prepared for their reception. This might be done by inducing the Turkish Government to make the present Mohammedan inhabitants fall back upon the extensive and partially cultivated countries of Asia Minor, where they might be put in possession of tracts and allocations, equally advantageous, and far superior in value to those they abandoned. Although this proposition may not be consistent with the spirit of our institutions, it is consistent with the arbitrary manners and customs of these orientals, with whom such things are of frequent occurrence, and it would be attended with little hardship to a migratory people, who

consider themselves strangers in the land, and whose entire moveables consist of a carpet and a few cooking utensils. There still remains the Christian population; these are thinly scattered through the various towns, with the exception of Bethlehem and Nazareth, whose inhabitants are nearly all of that faith. The Syrian Christians are ignorant and superstitious, and the position in which the Jews would be placed with respect to them might therefore appear likely to lead to collisions unfavorable to their peaceful settlement. But in fact, there is little danger to be apprehended, for these Christians are themselves helpless and require protection; and harmless, except when made the instruments of persecution by bigoted and designing Europeans. I had an opportunity of seeing an instance of this at Damascus, on the occasion of the disappearance of a monk belonging to the Capuchin convent. For the purpose of raising a persecution against the Jews, they were reported to have made away with him; this false pretext was soon magnified into the general accusation of child-murder; and shameful to say, this malicious attempt at reviving the worn-out superstitions of Europe, against a harmless and defenceless race, was headed and fomented by the consul of civilized France, Mr. Rattimenton, and the European monks.

But for the uncalled-for interference of these persons, the original cause of the disturbance could have been the subject of a few days' wonder, for want of even the slightest circumstantial evidence to bring home a crime to any one, much less to the object of their fanatical animosity. A persecution was, nevertheless, raised against them, severe, though necessarily of short duration, for as soon as it became known, it was put down by the indignation of Europe.

Such things in the present day could happen only under a Mohammedan Government; and I mention it to show that the Christian population are not themselves disposed to initiate disturbances; and to prevent their becoming the tools of others, a very temperate exercise of authority would be required. Every conciliatory measure consistent with firmness might be extended to them, and the several Christian powers, under whose protection the convents now existing, are professedly placed, should be applied to, to furnish them with good, intelligent, and peaceful superiors. These convents should not be allowed to acquire more property in land than they already possess, and all, whether ecclesiastical or civil, be made strictly amenable to the laws which might be framed to regulate the new state.

I avoid entering on the very wide question of the conversion of the Jews as being quite foreign to the subject in its political bearings; but speaking from personal observation, I do not apprehend that they would evince any disposition to revert to the forms of their abrogated dispensation; for however averse to inquiry and fearful of looking fairly into the subject, men of intelligence among them, (and with these we should have to deal,) feel and cannot conceal from themselves, that the time for such things is irretrievably past; besides which, it should be made an indispensable condition of our assistance, that they should not attempt to restore their obsolete ceremonial.

Every important enterprise must necessarily be attended with some difficulty. Many impediments which in the distant perspective appear dangerous or immovable, when boldly approached, diminish gradually and disappear. I would anticipate every possible objection to the carrying out of

this project, but after considerably weighing all that can be alleged against it, I find nothing which an ordinary share of judgment and resolution may not easily surmount and remove.

Supposing, therefore, the country placed at our disposal, with these or similar boundaries, we must now take into consideration the amount of force which would be required for its protection. Having little military experience, anything I may propose on this head can only be by way of suggestion, and may be improved on, or set aside altogether, by superior professional skill. I consider, then, that three subsidiary regiments of infantry, two of irregular cavalry, and twelve field-pieces, would be an adequate force to maintain the peace of the interior, and the integrity of the frontier, so far as native hostility is concerned. But should this be thought too small for the purpose, it should be borne in mind that it is free from the very great objections applicable to a larger force—which are, the want of rapidity of movement, the superior difficulty of obtaining supplies, and the rash confidence generated by numbers, by which the results of so many arduous undertakings have been sacrificed.

For the proper distribution of this force, as well as for important general purposes, this territory should be divided into three provinces, unequal in extent, but regard being had to the general aspect of the country.

The northern province, being mountainous, should have for its southern boundary a line drawn diagonally from the sea-coast, south of Mount Carmel, to the river Jordan. To this division should be allotted one regiment of foot and a brigade of six guns; head-quarters at Acre, with detachments at Tiberias, Nazareth, and Jenin.

The midland province, likewise

mountainous, should be separated from the southern by a line from Gazza, running south of Bethlehem, to the Dead Sea. One regiment of infantry would suffice for this province, to be stationed at Nablous, with detachments at Jaffa, Jerusalem, and Jericho.

The southern province, being flatter, verging on the desert, and affording greater facilities of transport, would comprise a larger extent, and reach to the borders of Egypt. This province should have the third regiment of foot and a brigade of six guns; head-quarters at Hebron, with detachments at Gazza, El Arish, and the new station on the Red Sea. In this division should also be the head-quarters of the two bodies of irregular horse. These should be raised from the Arabs of the bordering tribes, to be employed chiefly for the protection of the overland mail route, besides being available for the other provinces, and especially for their eastern frontier.

The Bay of Acre might be made the station, during the favourable season, for part of the Mediterranean fleet, and it would be very desirable to place a small armed iron steamer on the Dead Sea.

The country once settled, agriculture and commerce would naturally follow from the genial influence of British protection; I speak from personal observation of the effect of the mere influence of the English name in the neighbourhood of Herat, in 1841, where from this avowed protection alone, the whole country was fast recovering from the devastation and desolation caused by the unprincipled tyranny of its rulers, and the people returning to the peaceful occupation of trade and cultivation, and where the existence of a British tappal station, without even the presence of an European, was sufficient to rally cultivators around it,

and redeem the country from sterility. Alas! that such fair prospects should have been so early blighted, and such advantages so disgracefully sacrificed! But why, it may be asked, when on the threshold of a new enterprise, recall the discouraging retrospect of past disasters? Because it is the part of true courage, not only not to be daunted by failure, but to investigate with unshrinking mind the causes and remote springs of past misfortunes, in order to guard against their recurrence. We won not that land by our own sword; and its loss was the consequence and punishment of the vices of its invaders and the abuse of their advantages. A judicial blindness rendered them totally unconscious of the dangers that surrounded them, and when the blow fell, the paralyzed energies of the mass could oppose little resistance to the storm brought on by the culpable incapacity of its leaders. When we divest ourselves of the trammels of prejudice, and soar above the political atmosphere, it is impossible not to be struck, as we look down with unclouded eye on all the jarring elements, which rack and toss individuals and nations, in the action and reaction of the conflict of good and evil:—it is impossible not to be struck with the conviction of an irresistibly overruling influence co-existing with the entire free will of man, but directing his councils to the ends of Providence. Where the councils of man are in accordance with the will of God, they are superabundantly blessed and issue in results most glorious; but where the contrary, either the evil which would end in ruin is mercifully warded off, or the most magnificent undertakings of the pride of man,—the toilsome fruit of master-minds and the labour of million-hands, are suddenly blighted by one breath of the angel of death, or shattered by the blast of the

ireful elements, asserting the majesty of the Eternal, in calm derision of the unhallowed efforts of his creatures. The present, however, is in no respect a parallel case; besides which, instead of the direction of affairs being in the hands of a secondary agent, a demoralised government, it would be under the immediate and vigilant guidance of the British cabinet itself.

Palestine, though now barren and desolate, requires only an active and industrious population, so abundant are its natural advantages of soil and climate, to restore its original fertility. Not only is it rich in the indigenous produce of the Levant, it is equally adapted to the productions of Europe and the Tropics. Commerce from these circumstances alone must spring into life. But when we consider the known wealth of the Jews, and the immense funds they could command, together with the financial and mercantile experience which they would bring with them on their return to the land of their fathers, what a magnificent prospect of commerce is spread before us—what an extensive market for our manufactures! With this disposition of the Jews, engrafted on them by the habits of centuries and judicious encouragement, this protected state might in a few years monopolise the whole import trade of Central Asia, and compete with the commerce of Russia on its own southern frontier.

The advantages derivable to England from this measure are so great, that it would almost appear that my real object was to benefit my own country, instead of advocating the cause of a proscribed and harmless race; but so true is it, that "cast thy bread upon the waters and it shall return to thee after many days," that the protection afforded to this people would quickly return

in blessings on England, and be felt in the wretched hearts and homes of the poor manufacturers of Manchester, Birmingham, and Glasgow.

It is not supposed that the British government require any inducement to the undertaking of so noble a work of humanity, when once convinced of its feasibility, and the probability of its success, that we would recapitulate the advantages to be derived from it. But we would speak to the public mind,—not only those persons to whom great and good actions are their own recommendation, but those also whose opinions and judgments are governed by interest and expediency only in the adoption of any proposed political measures. It is, therefore, that we would point out the vast advantages to our commerce and manufactures, the safety attendant on securing our overland communication in our own hands, and the most important bulwarks against national enemies, from this desirable footing in the Levant, all insured by this step, as well as the ulterior cheering prospects of the spirit of religion and civilization which it promises.

The Jews in all parts of the world have, during the lapse of years, kept their attention and hopes fixed on Palestine, to which country they never doubt of returning. Large collections in money are annually made throughout all the countries where they are numerous, and willingly given for the support of the synagogue at Jerusalem. They would eagerly embrace the opportunity offered them of returning thither, and their gratitude to their deliverers would be unbounded, at the same time that

they could attain no good end by turning against us.

Although, as already mentioned, this subject has lately been more forcibly impressed on my mind by their persecutions and sufferings, which have induced me to lift up a voice in their behalf, the condition of this extraordinary race of people has long been to me a consideration of deep sympathy and absorbing interest, and I cannot but entertain the conviction that whether we hear or whether we forbear, something of the nature of the arrangements herein proposed, must take place at some early period. For thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night. If those ordinances depart from before me, *then* the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried on their shoulders, &c. I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, *wherein your fathers have dwelt*, and they shall dwell therein, even *they and their children* and their *children's children* for ever; and they shall say, "This land that *was desolate is become* like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced and are inhabited."

The Artist and the Trial

THE FOLLOWING DRAWINGS by Naf-tali Bezem were conceived under the impact of the Eichmann Trial in Israel.

Born in Germany in 1922, Bezem came to Israel with the *Youth Aliyah* in the late 1930's. He first studied and later taught at the Bezalel Art School in Jerusalem, and attracted attention from the start for his exceptional gifts. In recent years he has exhibited in international shows (Venice and Paris) and decorated the Israel pavilion at the 1958 World's Fair in Brussels, as well as had showings in the Bezalel and Tel Aviv museums in Israel.

A few central symbols make up the vocabulary around which these drawings are built: ladders which are at once gangways to heaven and windows of a prison; overturned candlesticks; fish, a traditional symbol of Jewish life, cut in half and gasping for air; the pointed knife of the *shochet*; the *kapporeh* rooster, symbol of sacrifice and atonement; a man standing on his head because the human condition itself has been stood on its head. There are more positive symbols also: the burning light; growing forms reminiscent of plant life in the bases of some candlesticks and a lion of Judah, quizzical and reflective. It is he, who in one of the drawings holds up the light to a falling *kapporeh*, while a small remnant of Jews march to a new life.

Bezem's work has its roots in the individual conscience. It is the victim

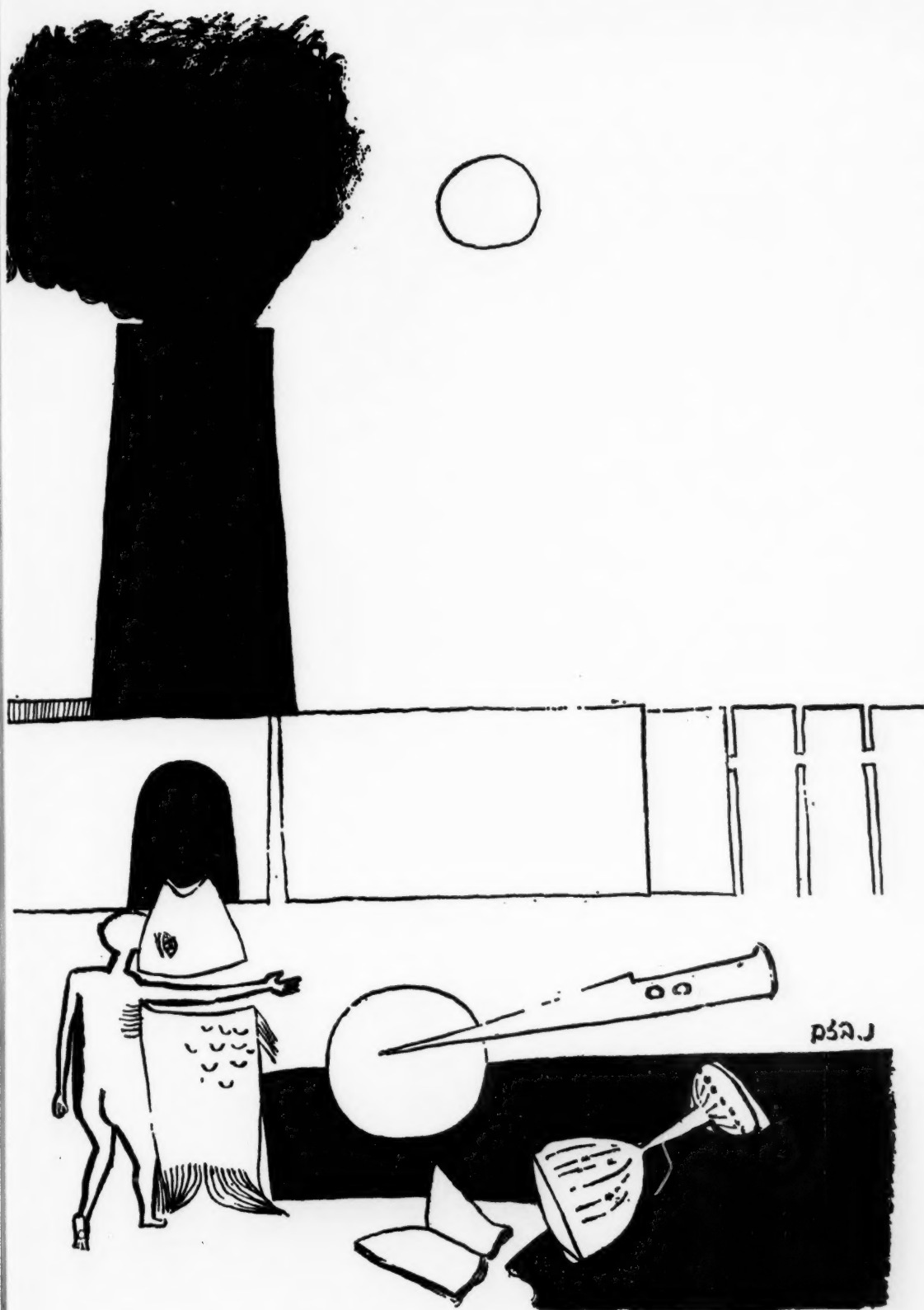
as individual who touches Bezem, and it is the individual conscience of the artist *qua* individual which lends his work its particular tone. Not a monologue, essentially, nor a generalized abstract message, Bezem's art is directed to all, yet to all individually.

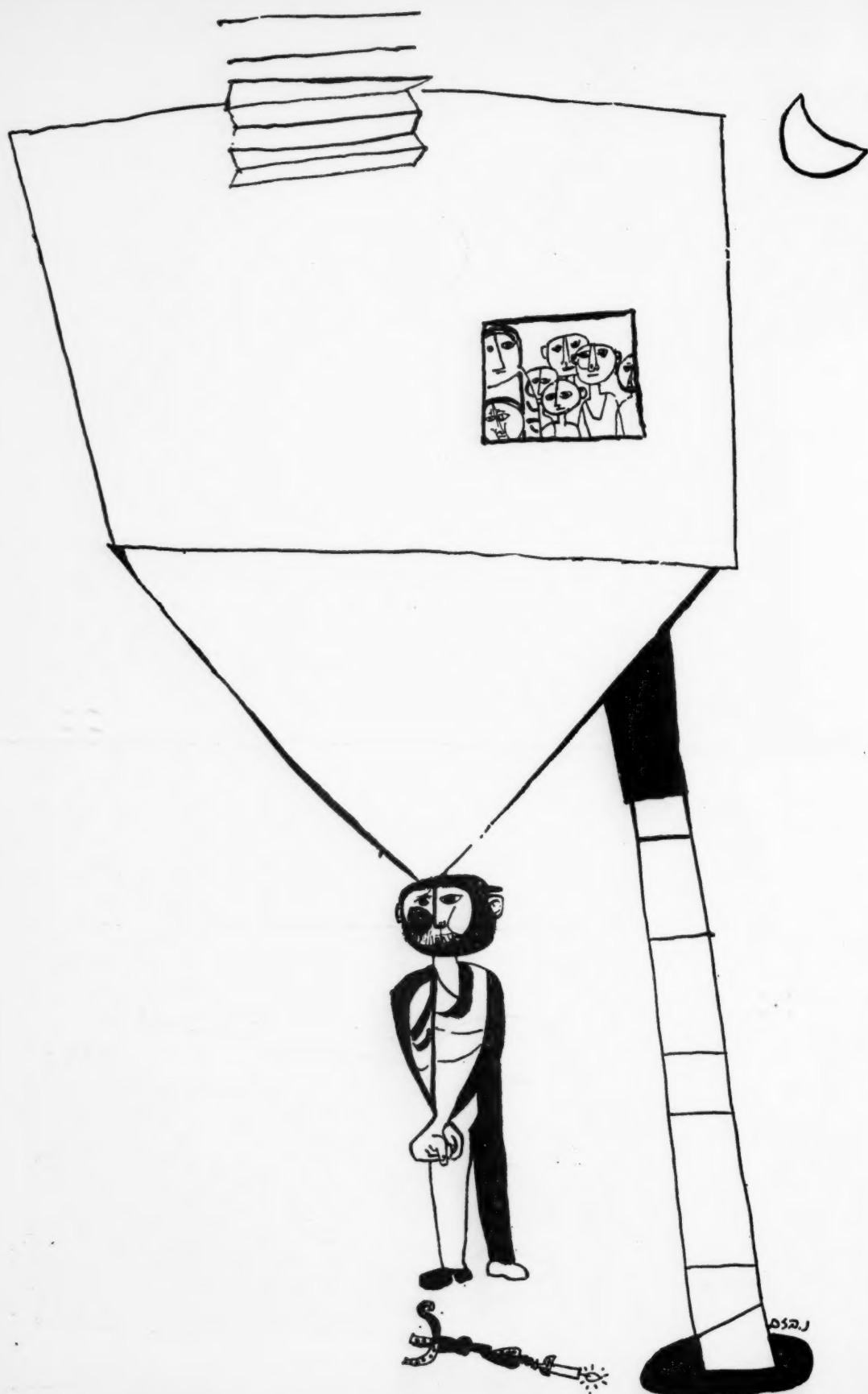
It is not surprising therefore that a single figure frequently serves as a symbol for the destiny of all. In one of the drawings, a naked man, his arm around a very human looking fish, walks toward a blackened gate behind which rises an ominous, smoking tower. The Kiddush cup, to the right, is fallen, and the open *Siddur* lies deserted, while the *shochet's* knife points to the man who is the dramatic center.

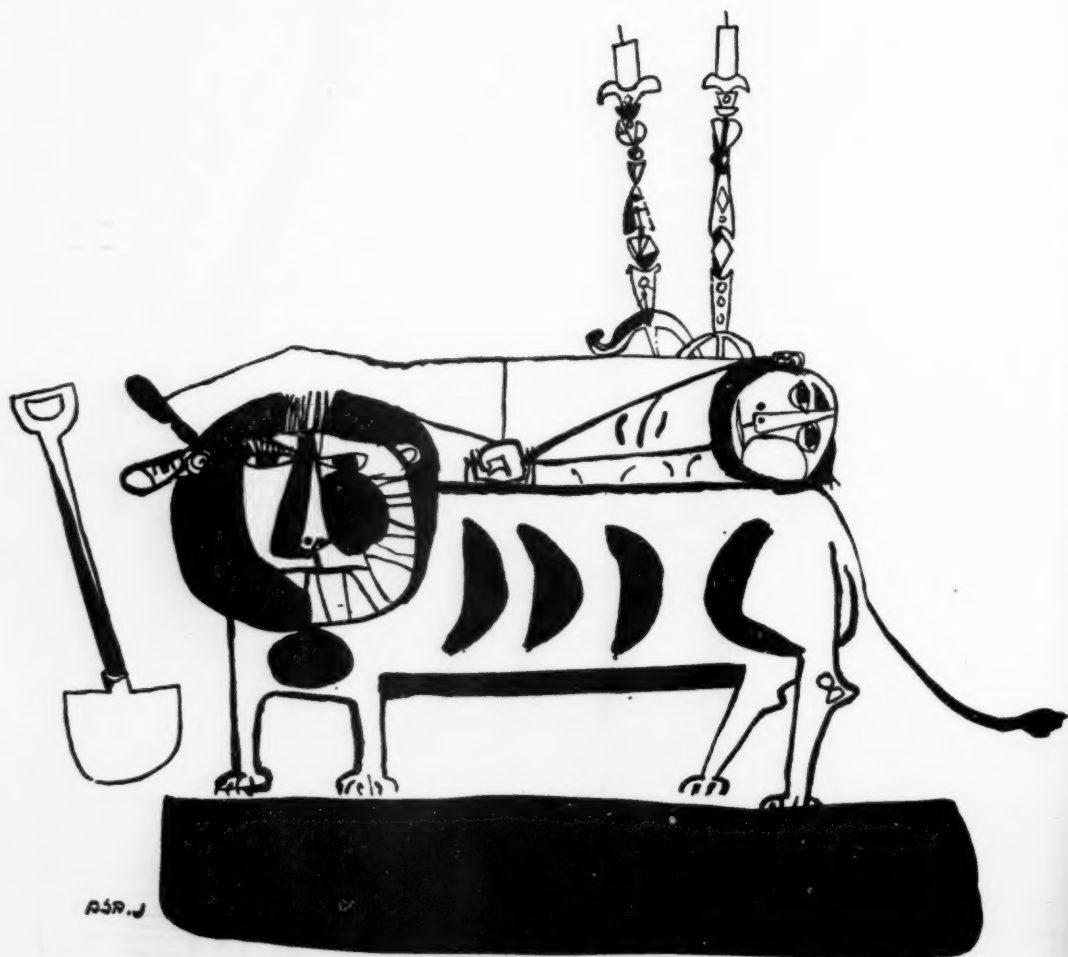
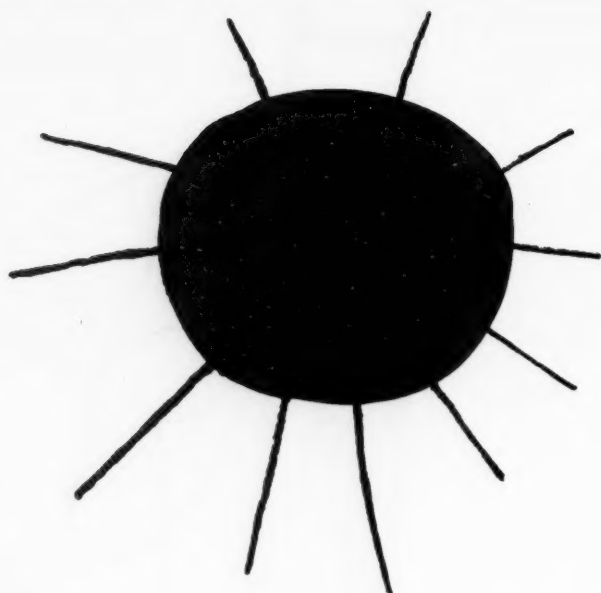
In another drawing, a man supports on his head a house perched on the tip of its roof. The position of the house is absurd, yet the man holds it up courageously, as though it were his assigned task and duty. The absurd has become the normal.

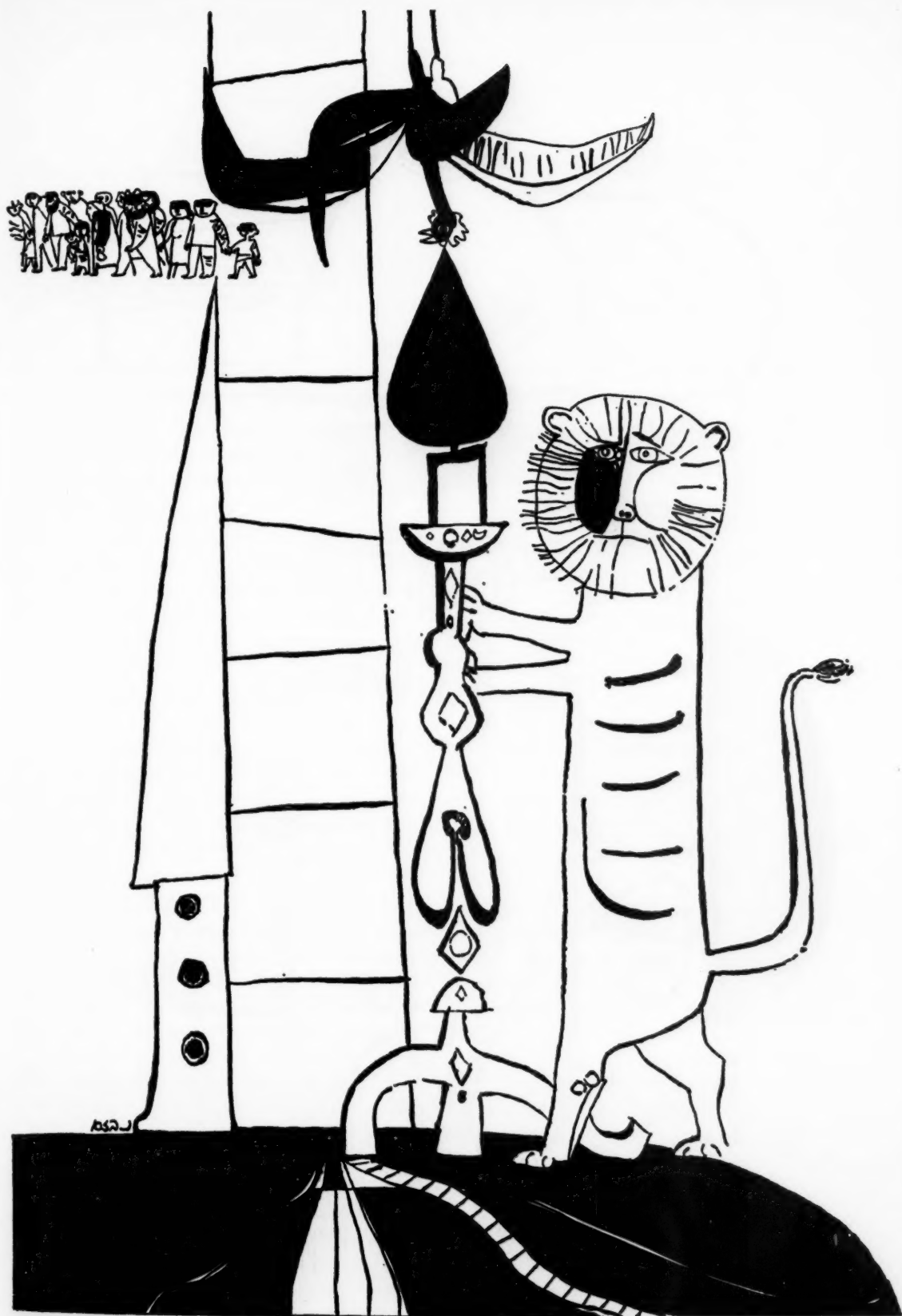
These sensitive, reflective drawings, not untouched, at times, by a kind of sardonic humor, bear witness to an event which, because of its very magnitude, has not yet been fully assimilated. Perhaps it can be fully understood and transcended only after the erection to it of a suitable artistic monument. Bezem's work may very well be one of the first of such monuments.

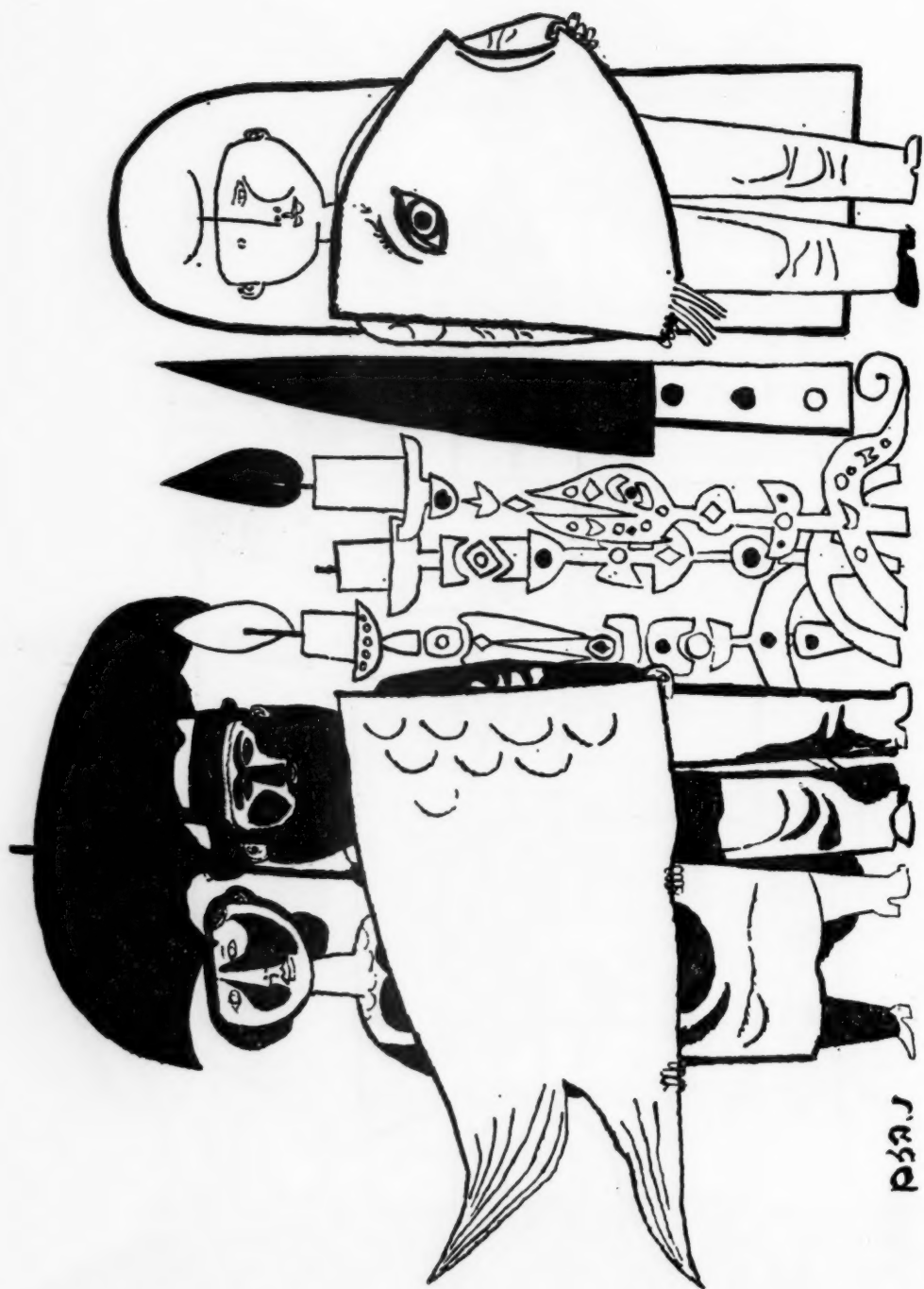
MARCEL L. MENDELSON











Notes in Midstream

By SHLOMO KATZ

Unpopular Notions

SOMETIMES, in a twilight hour, one permits the imagination to wander. What if the things we *know* in the daytime are not really so? Let us consider one of these.

Here we are, and all is fine and good and wonderful. We, meaning Jews; all is fine, meaning America; wonderful, meaning, well you know, progress, etc. On the face of it, it makes sense. We are satisfied, we (many of us) are affluent, I would almost say we are liked, if not loved, and yet . . .

How many times have we heard it said—and said it ourselves—that America is different, that Europe is an entirely different story, and in any case, it need not and can not and will not happen again. (Do we protest too much?)

It helps when somebody not given to morbid fears, and not ideologically suspect of Zionist fears, expresses a similar awareness. That is why the remarks of Dr. John Slawson in the May issue of the American Jewish Committee *Committee Reporter* rang a bell strongly. Dr. Slawson says: "The role of 'Jewish success' in its historical perspective deserves our concern. In the United States we are fabulously well off in many respects. The Jews of America occupy the best position of any Jewry in history. Looking into this history there arises a worrisome correlation. Success and prosperity in so many

instances have been followed by danger and even persecution. In the long and winding history of the Jew, we have seen reversals, sometimes sudden ones, from heights of dignity and security and affluence down to the depths of desperation, discrimination and persecution. . . . In France, seventy-five years ago, Jewry had great stature. Then came the Dreyfus affair; or go back to Germany during the Weimar Republic; or to Soviet Russia—the first fifteen years following the revolution—and what happened subsequently. These examples lead to frightening questions: Is the threshold of acceptance a limited one? Is there a correlation between success and extrusion? There is no law of history that states that this *must* happen here. But there is no warrant to assume that security and prosperity must be eternal. For in the United States, as well as in all parts of the world, there is one common factor of danger—the danger of crisis, with its attendant frustrations, anguish and feelings of betrayal."

Here we have it. The thing that *must not be said* has been said. What are we to do with it? By daylight we will no doubt forget about it, sweep it under the carpet. But though hidden, the doubt will remain.

We have many taboos. "It can't happen here and it need not" is one of them. One must not challenge these taboos. It is too frightening. But in the twilight hours between light and dark,

one permits oneself to ask questions one does not ask otherwise. Supposing, just supposing that it can happen. Then what?

I know it is not polite to raise questions like that. It is most unseemly and discourteous to introduce such notions into the wedding party of our present affluence and security. It is downright radical. Just the same, supposing . . .

Malcolarez Cobrado

WHAT DO THESE words mean? Nothing at all. You will not find them in any dictionary, and yet they have a very important meaning.

I came across them in the following manner. Long ago I read somewhere that when the late engineer Samuel Schwartz went to Portugal about 40 years ago, he there discovered some remaining descendants of the Marranos. (Marranos, as everyone knows, were Jews who had been forced to adopt Catholicism in Spain and Portugal 400 years ago, but who secretly remained Jews.) He found that some of their descendants still met on occasion, to observe some long-forgotten Jewish holidays, and on these occasions, among other things, they repeated this mystical formula: *malcolarez cobrado*. The words sound Portuguese, but have absolutely no meaning in that language. After much investigation, he discovered the origin of this formula. The forefathers of these Marranos used to meet secretly for necessarily brief observances of Jewish religious occasions. At these times, they recited the phrase, *mlo kol ha'arets kvodoh*. ("The whole world is full of His glory.") Gradually they and their descendants forgot the meaning as well as the sound of these words and compacted them into *malcolarez cobrado*.

It is curious how many *malcolarez cobrado's* we have all about us. The

other day I happened to look at a copy of the *Jewish Daily Forward*. On the right hand of the masthead, there is a box of type (probably set some 60 years ago in stainless steel) which reads: "Workers of the World, Unite!"; in the left hand corner of the masthead, a similar revolutionary slogan dating back to the turn of the century, to the effect that the liberation of the workers will be accomplished by themselves only, fills another box. The *Forward* was once a radical socialist paper, but now its readers are aged and well-to-do, and the slogan "Workers of the World, Unite!" which has even been removed from the buttons of Red Army uniforms for many years, certainly has no more meaning for them. They read the *Forward* because of its Jewish news, serialized novels, medical information, feature articles and similar items. And yet there it remains, emblazoned on the masthead in indestructible type: **WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!** As if these aged people in their homes, or in Homes for the Aged of the Workmen's Circle are about to march on City Hall and proclaim the proletarian revolution in New York City! *Malcolarez Cobrado!*

Recently I had occasion to see the membership card of a member of a well-known Zionist Organization, a fine and very sympathetic group to whom I owed allegiances in my youth, but whose radical fervor has long since dimmed. On the back of that membership card, in minute type (the small type on insurance policies which nobody notices), there was the same proclamation of faith in dated revolutionary goals harking back to 1905. *Malcolarez cobrado*.

Personally I love these two words. They have a wonderful Iberian ring. But isn't it time to revise the masthead slogans of long ago, the lovable, once inspiring and now calcified formulas?

Segregation-Integration

INTEGRATION IS A wonderful word. Segregation is an 11-letter dirty word. But words have different meanings in various localities. For instance: some years ago France offered full integration to the Algerians. They vehemently refused to become Frenchmen. They wanted to be Algerians. In accordance with the principle of self-determination, we respected their wish. Algeria also has about 1,000,000 Europeans, most of whom lived there for several generations. (Albert Camus was one of these—not all of them are Colons.) It is right, we say, that 7,000,000 Algerians should refuse to become part of the French nation of 50,000,000. But it is wrong (thus liberal opinion maintains) for 1,000,000 Frenchmen to refuse to become Algerians. Why? The proportion is approximately the same—one to seven.

No person in his right mind will defend colonialism or imperialism. It is a fact, however, that in the course of the past few centuries, all sorts of pockets and enclaves of population and culture have arisen in various parts of the world. When the Soviet Union grabbed and now tries forcibly to assimilate Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, we say it is a crime. We call it Soviet imperialism. But when the Algerian government-in-exile wishes to annex and absorb and eventually deracinate a million Europeans in Oran and in Algiers, we see no wrong in this.

The solution of this problem may lie in the complete abandonment of the idea of the nation-state and the substitution if not of an international government—a kind of brotherhood of man—at least of regional regimes not based on nationality. But for the time being, national states are the prevailing rule—more than a score of new ones were recently established and still others are on the way. By what rule of

decency, fairness and reason must 1,000,000 Frenchmen become integrated into 7,000,000 Algerians when 7,000,000 Algerians must not be integrated into 50,000,000 Frenchmen?

If the principle of the majority is to be final and decisive, then presumably we must all become Chinese, for verily, why must 200,000,000 people in the Soviet Union maintain a separate political and cultural existence when there are 600,000,000 Chinese in China? Or, why must 60,000,000 Pakistanis split off from India and become independent when India has a population of 350,000,000?

It is a serious problem. The fine principle of self-determination has to be defined more clearly. When and where are separate political and cultural existence justified, and at which point do they become arbitrary claims inducing chaos?

Desegregation

JEWISH EXPERIENCE with desegregation in the eastern hemisphere has led to some grave doubts. Interpret it as one may, there remains the overwhelming fact that however great and extensive the persecution of Jews in Europe in earlier centuries (pogroms, expulsions, ghetto walls, yellow patches, and a host of other indignities and degradations), genocide in its literal, physical sense was only practiced on the Jews nearly a century and a half after their emancipation in Europe.

Forty years after the Bolshevik revolution, its promise of complete equality has proved a fraud. It has led neither to freedom nor to voluntary integration. Addressing a group of French socialists who had recently visited the Soviet Union, Khrushchev declared: "Now we have *our own people*, and Russians must now take over the positions which rightfully belong to them." Whereas in Czarist days, Jews in Russia

were limited to a geographical Pale of Settlement, they now carry their Pale stamped on their passports, which identify them as Jews for purposes of restriction. (A bitter joke that recently emerged from the Soviet Union tells of a Jewish professional man who was applying for a job and had to fill out a questionnaire. To question number 5, "What is your nationality?" he answered, "Yes." During the interview that followed, he was asked the meaning of this strange answer. He explained: "Your purpose in asking this question was in order to find out whether I am a Jew, and thus, whether to withhold from me the job I applied for. I, therefore, anticipated your intention and answered, yes.") During the recent uproar in the Soviet Union centering about the now famous poem, "Babi Yar" by Yevgeny Yevtushenko, Professor Starikov, who attacked Yevtushenko, coined a new definition of national identity. For the first time, to my knowledge, he used the term "a Jew by passport."

Thus, the promise of the revolutionary socialist state to achieve complete freedom and integration has resulted in this new monstrosity—segregation, and all that this implies, on the basis of administrative bureaucratic definition. This might appear to be easily remedied—do away with the passport system in the Soviet Union. Alas, this easy solution is not very convincing. The same motives that created the "passport Jew" will devise some new gimmick. We may rest assured that Soviet bureaucracy is at least as inventive as segregationists in the South in this country. When the "Grandfathers' Clause" could no longer be enforced in the South, Negroes were asked to recite from memory large sections of the Constitution before being permitted to register for the vote. If and when the passport system in the Soviet Union

is done away with, we can confidently expect that Soviet inventiveness (didn't they put a man in orbit?) will devise some new segregationist system, while paying lip-service to the equality promised in their own Constitution. Jews in Russia might then be asked to recite from memory all the volumes of *Das Kapital* before becoming eligible for a diplomatic post, for instance.

Are we, therefore, to despair of the ultimate effectiveness and desirability of the principles behind desegregation and integration? No. But we might do well to understand them on deeper levels, in the sense that integration also implies self-integration and not merely a dash for complete self-obliteration. Similarly, it would be well constantly to bear in mind that the process of social, cultural, ethnic and emotional desegregation is not an even one, that the answer to this evil is not always a formal arithmetical negation of it, and that it is subject to "reversals, sometimes sudden ones from heights of dignity and security and affluence to depths of desperation, discrimination and persecution . . ."

A depressing prospect, but hardly one to be ignored.

Noah's Fallout Ark

FROM CHILDHOOD there remain clear memories of illustrations in books of Bible stories. One of these portrays Noah standing on the deck of his newly constructed shelter—excuse me, ark—and supervising the animals as they sedately march up the gangplank in pairs. The line of animals in the picture stretches to the end of the page. They are all well-behaved: there is no shoving or trying to get in front of one-another. In fact, some of the animals seem to have very distinct smiles on their faces. Looking at this picture one might have thought they were going to visit a zoo on a sunny spring Sunday

afternoon, admission free. What happened to all the other animals on earth doomed to die in the flood? Apparently they were philosophically resigned to their fate and none of them tried to crash the line and be saved.

Now we know that this idealized picture is a false representation of the event. In what appears to be the eve of our own latter day deluge, we have learned that this is not the way animals behave. Although nuclear bombs to be exploded in anger are at the moment still in the future, our reaction is already unlike that of the animals in the Bible illustration of the flood. "A man has a moral right to use violence to keep his unprepared neighbor from entering the family fallout shelter after a nuclear attack," a Catholic priest declared in an article in the Jesuit magazine *America*. "Nowhere in traditional Catholic morality does one read that Christ in counseling non-resistance to evil rescinded the right of self-defense, which is granted by nature and recognized in the legal systems of all nations," declared Father McHugh.

This humane statement immediately aroused a wave of debate, which is in a sense irrelevant. The very possibility of such a point of view being raised (and the rackets in fallout shelters reported in the press, and the hysterical mental preparations in some outlying districts to meet potential refugees from bombed-out cities with something less than love) raises another question. Let us assume that Joe Smith builds himself a fallout shelter and stocks it adequately with canned tomato soup and thus manages to survive after shooting some of his less provident neighbors who wish to share his provisions. What kind of a society will he and others like him construct when they finally clamber out of their underground caves and, stepping over the decomposed bodies of the neighbors whom they shot, they begin to survey the damage?

As an educational campaign, perhaps it would be wise for publishers of illustrated Bible stories to delete the sweetly reassuring pictures of a generous Noah welcoming the animals, two by two, with the latter marching decorously into the shelter. A more realistic picture would show the animals clawing at each other in a mad rush to enter the ark, while Noah and his sons stand on deck armed with bows and arrows to keep them out of his family shelter.

Don't we know that it is unethical and harmful to deceive the kiddies?

Letter to B.G.

For some time now, I have wanted to write a letter to Ben-Gurion. I never got around to it, so I will say what I wanted to tell him in the unwritten letter.

It concerns Ben-Gurion's oft repeated statement that only he is a Zionist who goes to settle in Israel. I have been proclaiming myself a Zionist for a good many years now. Yet I have not settled in Israel. What I wanted to say to Ben-Gurion was more or less as follows:

If it is a question of semantics, I will gladly consent to stop calling myself a Zionist. But is it merely that? Is permanent residence in Israel the only criterion of a person's Zionism? The ultra orthodox in *Mea She'arim* who do not recognize the existence of Israel, and would not even buy an Israel postage stamp lest it be interpreted as recognition of the state of Israel, live in Jerusalem. By your definition they are Zionists. If they are, then of course, I am not one. Recently a hassidic rabbi from Williamsburg took his congregation and moved to a spot near Natanya in Israel. He did so for reasons similar to those which impelled another group of hassidim from Williamsburg to move to New Jersey and set up a village of their own where they could live in isolation from the world. I must confess, I feel

little in common with either of these two groups.

Then what is Zionism? Everybody—with the exception, perhaps, of members of the American Council for Judaism who are perfect Zionists in reverse—feels sympathetic and friendly toward Israel. When I say I am a Zionist, I distinguish myself from them. In addition to emotional involvement with Israel, I would briefly define my Zionism as a sense of alienation here—in other words, a feeling of being in *galut*.

Why then don't I go to settle in Israel? It sounds so simple. One picks up one's handful of belongings and one goes there. But you, David Ben-Gurion, know very well that it is not nearly as simple as all that, that historical processes are afoot which one may not ignore, except at the cost of cutting oneself off from these processes and from the community, and of becoming merely an individual whose travels here and there are of no significance. History is not something that we can step out of at will. When the time came for European Jewry to go (and they failed to do so), they paid for it with their lives. When the time came for Jews in the Oriental communities to leave, they went, even though most of them had never heard the word Zionism.

Need I point out that historical processes can neither be restrained nor can they be hastened before their time. Jewish history knows many instances of trying to prod history to quicker motion, and the price that was paid for it.

The Jewish situation in America today is not like that which prevailed in Europe or in Yemen or which prevails today in North Africa or in the Soviet Union. What the future holds may be uncertain, but whatever it is, it cannot be hastened before its time.

If you, David Ben-Gurion, feel nevertheless, that those American Jews who are not merely sympathetic to Israel, but live in a state of constant tension with their environment, with a sense of being in exile, have no right to call themselves Zionists, I will gladly accede to your wish. After all, what difference does it make what one calls oneself. But it seems to me, in all fairness, that you should realize the difference between those who merely extend good wishes toward the earthly Jerusalem while finding their Zion on the plains of the Mississippi, and the others, be their number large or small, who, not ready for whatever reasons to uproot themselves, nevertheless live in this world but not entirely of it, involved in the vision of the end of time which *may* be any time, though nobody knows when.

You have often criticized those who call themselves Zionists yet remain here. I am sure you know that it is not, in most instances, a case of fear of seasickness, or opportunism. If your condemnation of self-proclaimed Zionists who remain in the dispersion is merely a rhetorical challenge, it is exaggerated. If it is meant literally, you imply that the entire Jewish community in America is dead to Zionism and is only capable of sympathy for Israel.

The Day I Smashed the Pushka

By JULIUS HORWITZ

THE PUSHKA came in the mail in a plain brown wrapper and we hung it on the nail in our broom closet. I remembered from my mother's house the pushka that seemed as much a part of the kitchen as the dishes that were always piled up in the sink. There were too many children in our house for the dishes to ever get done. And for all of us, there was the plunk of a coin in the pushka when my mother wearied of this world and had a vision of Israel.

The pushka was emptied with a frequency that made me realize at an early age that time was not measured in days but in events. The man who came to empty the pushka never spoke to me. I think he made out a receipt to my mother, and if the pushka seemed to be heavy with coins he had a good word to say. Otherwise he was in and out of the kitchen like the moon.

I asked my mother who he was. And my mother told me he was the man who emptied the pushka. I think she gave me this simple explanation because I was only five years old at the time. Five is the age of asking questions. The explanations only lead to more questions. And I know now that adults can never answer the questions children ask. I remember a question I asked my mother when I was five years old. "Ma," I said, and I only remember this because it was repeated to me at intervals until I was thirty, "Ma," I said, "who takes care of a little baby, I mean a very little baby, a tiny baby, if there is no one else in the world, no mama, no daddy, nobody, just the little baby, a baby smaller than Dicky." Dicky was three months old at the time and even at three months he seemed to be able to get what he wanted. My mother didn't know what to tell me. How could she? She did say that the baby would be taken care of. "By whom?" I asked. "By whoever would take care of him." And if there was nobody, I insisted. "Somebody will still take care of him," my mother told me. Being five, I insisted on knowing who. I also remember that it pained me to ask the question. I cried asking the question. I could feel my head pounding and it seemed as though all the earth was forcing me to explain its existence.

I had no explanation of existence at five. And I have none at thirty. So when the pushka came I hung it in the broom closet and emptied my pocket of change. My wife told me not to put in so much money at one time. And I wondered if she would seize the habit of dropping a coin in the pushka when she tired of this world. We lived in a walk-up apartment

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in Brooklyn Heights, and most of our life seemed to consist of waiting for the tenant facing the harbor to move, so that we could inherit the view.

One day my wife slapped Joshua right across his face for spilling Bosco on his shirt sleeve and when his scream almost shattered the water glasses, my wife rushed to the pushka and dropped in fifteen cents, and the dropping of the coins quieted Joshua and quieted my wife.

Joshua asked, "Why did you do that?"

"Slap you in the face?" my wife asked.

"No, put in the money."

Joshua is five.

My wife had no ready explanation. She had no vision of Israel. There had never been a pushka in her house. She found herself in that wonderful human situation of having to invent a story.

"I put it in because I slapped you."

"Is that good or bad?" asked Joshua.

"It's good."

"Because you slapped me?"

"No, because I put the money in."

"Why is that good?" Joshua insisted.

"It's good because it's good to do good things."

The compilers of the Talmud would have been proud of my wife.

One day I hit Joshua. Not hard. But hard enough for him to realize that I didn't like oatmeal rubbed into my Daks. I didn't rush to the pushka to drop in money. And I did see his face turn toward the pushka in the broom closet.

I didn't want Joshua to grow up thinking that money was only dropped into the pushka when he got slapped, and so for several days that week I dropped in coins when I came home. Joshua also got into the habit of dropping in coins, preferring the pushka to his complicated black metal bank with a lever that registered the deposits with a ping and a remarkable accuracy.

NO ONE EVER CAME around to collect the money from the pushka, and its weight grew. The coins no longer rang when they were dropped, but fell in comfortably padded, like a decent-size savings account. I would have liked to have seen one of those bearded, tieless, beaver-hatted men who never spoke knock at our door and enter the kitchen and empty the pushka and give us a look that meant we would be admitted to my mother's vision. I'm not irreverent of Israel. But Israel is remote to me, like all of the places where I've never been. Though I've never been able to satisfactorily explain to myself why I choke up when I read about Akiba or read English translations of the Talmud with an I-told-you-so inner voice toward all the books on my eight walls. "It is not incumbent upon thee to complete the work; but thou must not therefore cease from it." Who has said it better? John Dewey? Show me where.

One day I took Joshua on the bus across Brooklyn into Williamsburg, the neighborhood I began to think of as the neighborhood of pushkas. For here in the brownstones and red-brick walk-ups, a neighborhood that was always decaying, the pushkas must hang in every kitchen like electric light

bulbs. I couldn't explain to Joshua that Williamsburg was a fairyland where men and women still dressed in costumes and practiced what was sanctity elsewhere. Five is not a religious age. On South Second Street we passed a tall bearded Hasid in a great beaver hat who walked like a king. Joshua did ask me if he was a king. I was poetical and answered, "No, he's a bridegroom." Joshua didn't ask me for an explanation. His attention was taken up by a boy his age who wore *peies*. Joshua didn't ask for an explanation of the *peies* but observed the boy as though the sight was worth remembering. I knew it would come up, for Joshua always asked delayed questions. And I quickly realized that I didn't have a ready explanation for the *peies*. I had a notion that the hair wasn't cut out of respect for the word of God. But then Joshua would swiftly ask me why his mother took him to Best & Co. for haircuts.

I have always been disappointed in Williamsburg. Brooklyn is the wrong neighborhood for Williamsburg—at least the Williamsburg of the Hasidim. There are parts of Williamsburg so ugly that you want to empty all of the pushkas in Williamsburg and plant trees in the naked sidewalks.

But I've never lived in the quarter. And I'm sure that for those who have spent their lives remote from the BMT, in the store front synagogues that you enter as you would a delicatessen, in kitchens that must resemble my mother's, that kind of Williamsburg must be as real as the coins that go into the pushkas. I think that must be the sadness of America. We never feel we're living in the real place.

But you want to know about the day I smashed the pushka.

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED. I came home from Manhattan out of the Brooklyn end of the BMT tube as though I had been forced to walk under water from Broad Street to Court Street.

I went up the three flights to our apartment denied the view of the bay and saw Joshua busy putting together a wooden puzzle from Holland. I love it when he speedily puts together a puzzle. I think of him as outwitting the psychologists.

Joshua hurried over to me, searching my coat pockets for bubble gum. I looked at his extraordinary face that knew nothing about the world.

"No bubble gum," I told him.

"You didn't bring me anything?"

I felt in a mood to tell him that I brought myself. But I've learned that we should never introduce our inner voice. It is all we have. Don't ask me where I've picked up such tid-bits of wisdom. Maybe it came from my mother's kitchen.

"Let's go fill the pushka," I told Joshua.

"But it is filled," he told me.

"We'll try some more."

My wife was busy putting a dead chop on an aluminum pan. A naked chop, trimmed for fat.

I took down the pushka. It was heavy with coins. The pushka had the traditional rattle. If you don't know what a pushka is then let me now tell you. A pushka is a metal box in which coins are collected and the coins go to plant trees where no trees have grown for two thousand years.

I held in my hand at least three Galilean trees. I once planted an apple core. I have watched Joshua stick carrot tops in water and they grew, a dead stalk of a carrot growing into slender green shoots. I have bought tomato seeds at the A & P and planted the seeds deep in Central Park but I think the sparrows got the seeds before they warmed to the earth, even the sand box earth of Central Park.

I took six pennies, a dime, a nickel and a quarter out of my pocket.

"That won't all go in," Joshua told me.

"We can try," I told him.

"Are you putting that all in?" my wife asked me.

The Talmud says that a man who gives charity in secret is greater than a king. And I have always wondered why I could never give charity in secret and be greater than a king.

"It won't all go in," Joshua told his mother. She looked relieved. We don't live on a budget. We live on what we have.

"Let's try." I gave the six pennies to Joshua. He slipped the pennies through the slot and they dropped with a plunk on top of the pile. I put in the dime. The quarter wouldn't go in.

"We have filled the pushka," I announced.

"What does that mean?" Joshua asked, shaking it.

"It means first of all that no more coins can go into the pushka."

"And what else?" Joshua asked.

"Nothing else," I told Joshua.

"Then what do we do now with the pushka?"

"We wait for a man to come and empty it and take the money and send it to where it has to go."

"And then we will fill the pushka again?" Joshua asked.

"If we want to."

"Will we?"

"Probably," I said.

"And why?" Joshua asked.

AND NASSAU STREET came into the kitchen. The Nassau Street I had left in the rain, a mist.

What was Nassau Street doing in our kitchen? What did it have to do with the pushka? Why did I suddenly remember a woman lawyer I knew at 120 Broadway who told me that she had lived in Outer Mongolia, that she had had a pushka in her house at the edge of the world.

I took the pushka from Joshua. I felt its weight in my hand. I began to roll it from hand to hand, catching it as it fell, flinging it up again, the coins rumbling.

"What are you doing that for?" Joshua asked, his voice as anxious as the coins that rumbled in the pushka.

If it weren't for the existence of passions no man would build a house, marry a wife, beget children or do any work. That's the Talmud again! What was my passion? Not to put coins in a pushka! Not to look for green grass on Nassau Street. I would say that the pushka was reminding me that I was on deposit, the coins going to a foreign land where I was supposed to have an account, like the men who bank in Switzerland. Yet I didn't want

to be on deposit somewhere else! I would say that not the place honors the man, but the man the place! Again quoting the Talmud...

The rest you know. The pushka fell and smashed open on the kitchen floor, the coins clattering into the foyer, rolling as far as the great marble fireplace. Joshua ran for the scotch tape. I bound up the pushka with scotch tape and we put back all the coins except three quarters that wouldn't fit. I hung the pushka back in the broom closet and I put the quarters in my pocket. On Monday morning I gave away the three quarters in hurried secrecy to a furtive man on Rector Street so that I could at least be greater than a king.



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In a Moscow Suburb

(From a Travel Diary)

By HANAN AYALTI

FOR A MOMENT it seemed as if I were somewhere in the Bronx, at a "family circle" meeting or some other family celebration: great-aunts from the Old Country; middle-aged men, mostly businessmen, with a sprinkling of factory workers, speaking half-Yiddish, half English; young people, high school or college students conversing in English about baseball or some movie star.

Instead of English, they spoke Russian, and the "local color" was also different: here was Aunt Tanya, an Old Bolshevik, venerable in years, one of the "Old Guard"; the nineteen-year old Komsomol member Natasha; her young cousin Svetlana, a high school student and a Pioneer; and their cousin Misha, also a Pioneer ("Red Pioneers," of course).

Yet the faces were familiar, as were the rhythms and inflections of their speech, and frequently the speech itself. Not all of them had political convictions or titles. Aunt Bashe, for instance, (a sister of the Old Bolshevik), was simply an old woman who had borne many children when she was younger and the family still lived in the Ukraine. Then came the revolution

and the Civil War, and they had moved to Kiev and later to Moscow. The children grew up in Moscow, and brought the parents both joy and sorrow—as children do all over the world.

Aunt Bashe's second son, Abrasha, had gone with the Red Army to the front and was killed in a battle near the Don, fighting against Hitler. He left behind a small child, his only daughter. Now she was a young lady—Natasha, a member of the Komsomol. Abrasha's wife had been very young at the time, but she never remarried. She received a government pension for her daughter, worked a little, and stayed close to the family. Now Natasha was already employed herself, in a laboratory, and planned to enroll in the Institute at night to study medicine.

Bashe's youngest daughter, Zhenya, had never married and lived with her mother. Why did she remain single? Who knows, perhaps she took too long picking and choosing. Such things happen. She was about forty, plump, pink cheeked, and had a good job as a book-keeper in a large factory. Not really an "old maid." Give her a young man and she'll marry!

Several of the children had moved

to faraway places. But the eldest son, Boris, brought Aunt Bashe great joy—both he and his children. It was at his house that the celebration took place. The occasion? His eldest son, a young mining engineer who had gone to work in the Urals, all the way to Magnitogorsk, had just won a prize and an important promotion. And the youngest boy, Mishka, had just turned thirteen. There was no Bar Mitzvah—how could a Pioneer celebrate Bar Mitzvah? But the family assembled this Saturday evening, to celebrate the birthday. When a boy reaches the age of thirteen, before you know it he is in the *Komsomol*.

Boris was more of a Jew than the others. This was evident in his whole appearance, his gestures and expressions, even his clothes. He did not attend synagogue, but he spoke Yiddish and was fond of Yiddish jokes and songs. On the anniversary of his father's death, he would quietly recite *Kaddish* in some corner. As a boy, when the family still lived in the Ukraine, he used to go with his father to synagogue; several times he had even accompanied his father on his trips to the fairs.

I WAS BROUGHT to this family party on Saturday evening by Aunt Tanya, the Old Bolshevik. I had been her guest at lunch that day, and stayed to spend the evening. She lived in a typical Moscow dwelling, in an old, densely populated block. One entered through the gateway into a dusty yard, and turned into an entrance hall. Tanya's room was at the far end of a long corridor, next to the bathroom. Throughout the length of the corridor, several doors led to other "apartments"—single rooms occupied by the neighbors, mostly couples and families with children. While Tanya was preparing lunch, I glanced into the kitchen. It

was near the entrance, and there were five tables, showing that the apartment was occupied by five tenants. To avoid contention, each housewife was provided with her own table.

Before the revolution, the apartment had probably been the home of one well-to-do family. The bathroom consisted of a toilet and a sink with running water. Although it was used by all the tenants, it was clean. But the plaster was peeling from the walls in spots and the faucets were a bit rusty.

We ate in Tanya's room. In addition to a table, the longish room contained a high, old-fashioned bed, a radio and a bookcase. Through the window we saw trees and flowerbeds. Tanya spread a white cloth on the table and set out a plate of bread. Then she filled my plate to the brim with soup—a thick soup with potatoes and vegetables—and stood over me, insisting that I eat it to the last drop. After that, she served me a second portion. For herself, she took a small bowl. "At my age, one does not eat much," she said. I had heard about her before this from other members of the family: she had spent many years in Siberian exile but remained true to the Communist Party.

"How was life in Siberia? In the concentration camp?" I asked her.

"Why deny it, those were difficult years," she shook her head. "Hunger . . . cold . . . but the worst of it was that the camp was ruled by thieves and scoundrels, enemies of the people and . . . anti-Semites. They made life miserable for the prisoners, especially the Jews . . ."

"Even anti-Semites?"

"Yes . . . But they all got their deserts in the end. They were all arrested, to the last one. The Party saw to it . . . More soup?"

"No, thank you, thank you, no more, really."

"Are you a Communist?"

"No."

"Woe is me!" she clasped her hands. "Then why am I telling you all this? I would never speak of these things to an outsider..."

It seems that one of her relatives had told her at the same time about me and about the New York "People's Delegation" which had come to Moscow to celebrate May Day, and she had confused me with them.

She brought in a bread pudding and served me a large slice:

"Try it, it's home made!"

"Thank you," I said, tasting the pudding. "How long were you in Siberia?"

"Altogether? About eighteen years, I guess... First, I was exiled, for about ten years... Then I was arrested and sent to camp..."

"You mean they arrested you when you were already in exile?"

"Yes... I mean it was this way: during the great purge, we were sent to Siberia. I went to work there in a factory. Later, I believe it was after the war, I came to Moscow on a work assignment and was here several weeks. It was just at the height of the large wave of arrests, and this time I was sent to a camp in Siberia."

She was somewhat confused about the dates. She was in her seventies and had suffered much and her memory was not always dependable. Her hair was white, and her face deeply furrowed with wrinkles. Her good-humored, motherly gaze occasionally became clouded, as if she had lost the thread of her thought.

BUT HER EYES BRIGHTENED when she began to speak about more recent, happier years. After Stalin's death, during the great amnesty, she was released, rehabilitated and her rights were restored. Even the years in Siberia were added to her service record. Now she belonged to the category of Old Bolsheviks, who enjoyed special priv-

ileges. She received a larger pension than ordinary retired workers of her classification, and she did not have to pay for subway rides. She had never lost her faith in the Party. Her imprisonment, she felt, had been a mistake, a nightmare. Now the wrong had been rectified. She was offered a modern apartment in one of the new projects, but she refused it. What for? She was old, and her room was good enough for her.

"How long have you been in the Party?"

"Oh, very long... I have been a member since the revolution, but I belonged to a revolutionary circle as far back as 1911. Those years were also reckoned in my record."

"Was it an 'Iskra' group?"

"No, there were no 'Iskra' people in our town. There were only the S.S. (Socialist Zionists), the Zionists, the Bundists... the *Samo'oborona* (Self-Defense)... We, our group, were Internationalists..."

She remembered those years as in a dream. She had been a servant with a rich Jewish family. Her employer's daughter, a student, was also a revolutionary and they met at secret gatherings. It never occurred to anyone that a simple servant girl would have anything to do with such things. In the revolutionary groups, she learned to read and write. Afterward came the revolution, the Civil War, the Five-Year Plans. She had never married, never had a personal life of her own; her entire life was dedicated to the Party. For years she had no contact with her family. Lately, however, they had come together again.

"What do you think, is Khrushchev an anti-Semite?" I asked her.

"He was... But not any longer..." she said and began to clear the table.

I offered to help her wash the dishes, but she refused. Meanwhile, her niece,

Sonia, a young woman in her thirties, still unmarried, came in. She lived in a nearby room.

I had heard about her too. She was a chemist by profession, but had suffered a nervous breakdown some years previously, and now was not working at all. Dark, with black eyes, she spoke loudly and nervously, and looked very Jewish.

She was one of the first Soviet Jews of the younger generation that I met, and I immediately showered her with questions. Before long, we came to the Jewish question in the Soviet Union.

"Do you feel any anti-Semitism here? I mean, in daily life?" I asked her.

"Anti-Semitism is outlawed in our country," she said. "Of course, occasionally some drunken hooligan will start reviling Jews in the street, but what sense is there in running for a policeman over every trifle?"

"Best not to provoke..." mumbled the old woman in Yiddish.

"I didn't want to say this," the younger woman said in Russian, "but since she brought it up..."

The old woman went to wash the dishes. Afterward, she said she would lie down for a while, so as not to be sleepy at the party at Boris' house. I went for a walk with Sonia. The street was crowded with gray people in shabby clothes. Sonia relaxed and became more talkative. Now the situation was much better, she said. When she had graduated from the Institute, the times were "difficult," and she had not been able to find any work in her field.

"Because you were Jewish?"

"I suppose so... yes..."

"What did they tell you?"

"That there were no openings. I went from one place to another, to factories, laboratories, and everywhere I got the same answer: there is no opening."

"What did you do?"

"I worked at whatever I could find:

as a secretary, a librarian... There was no difficulty getting these jobs. Now I could surely find work in my profession," she added sadly.

But now she was unable to work. She had not recovered completely from her breakdown. Was the breakdown a result of the rejections? Of her disappointments and humiliation? I must ask her relatives about it.

Meanwhile she began to speak about the new university recently built in Moscow. What a magnificent building! With enormous, bright halls, modern laboratories, and an automatic elevator to the library. There was even a swimming pool. There was a great deal of construction in Moscow, whole blocks were being built, she added with pride.

LATER WE WENT to Boris' house, first by subway (Tanya showed her card and did not pay any fare), and then by bus. It was in a suburb which had once been half-countryside, half-summer resort. When we arrived it was dark. The booths and stalls in the market were already closed for the day. Small peasant houses were scattered among the gardens and orchards.

Some of the guests had already assembled, others continued to arrive. Most of them were relatives—uncles, aunts and cousins, both on the father's and the mother's sides. Boris' family originally came from the Ukraine. After the revolution, they began to move to Moscow. Here they married other Jews from Byelorussia, Odessa, Minsk. The younger children were now Moscow-born. Here and there, a Gentile girl married into the family, but that evening all the guests were Jews.

The middle-aged were mostly members of the Soviet middle class: store employees, minor executives, bookkeepers, and so on. (I was told that there are more remote suburbs, along the Pushkin line, for example, where

the higher executives—the Soviet “aristocracy”—live: directors, electronics engineers, academicians, high-ranking military officers, research physicists, etc. In several of these suburbs, there are also concentrations of the more successful Jewish elements.)

Somewhat later, a neighbor came in, a cross-eyed man who was an independent artisan (working for himself rather than at a government factory). He made bast shoes in his home and sold them in the free markets of the neighborhood. He brought his son, Misha's schoolmate, also a Pioneer.

Another guest was a “non-Party” young man who lived nearby who owned a camera. He immediately became involved in a discussion with Natasha, the Komsomol member, while the young Pioneers removed his camera from its case and examined it closely.

Boris showed me through his home. It was his own house, with a spacious dining room, a bedroom, an alcove and a large kitchen. When they had moved in, many years ago, it was a dilapidated peasant hut. They had gradually repaired it, he told me with pride, and installed various facilities one by one: a bathtub, electricity, central heating. Behind the house was a garden and a small orchard. A dog, chained to a kennel, set up a loud barking.

Before the meal, the guests conversed in groups in the dining room.

“What do you think about Cuba?” I asked Boris (the newspapers and the radio had been blaring during the past few days about the Cuban invasion).

“I'll tell you something. My father lived seventy years, and got along without Cuba,” his eyes laughed. “And I'll also manage to get along without it somehow...”

The Old Bolshevik stood nearby, but she was slightly deaf in one ear. The Pioneers were absorbed with the

camera. The hostess had begun to set the table. Dark-skinned, with quietly glowing eyes, she looked familiar to me. Where had I seen her? Why, of course—Tevya the Dairyman's daughter, the prettiest of all! I helped her to bring the chairs to the table.

“What do the young people know about the Jews?” I asked her. “About Jewish history?”

“They know they are Jews, because they are made to feel it,” she said. “But let's not fool ourselves: they feel uncomfortable with their Jewishness. They would prefer to be like everybody else.”

She went to the kitchen and returned with a bottle of vodka and glasses on a tray.

“And you? How do you feel visiting us here?”

“Pretty good, better than I expected.”

“Why so?”

“Well, here I am at your party, I feel at home, we speak freely...”

She looked at me silently for a moment.

“Would you like to remain here?”

“Oh, no, that I wouldn't,” I answered quickly.

“Why not?”

“Well, it is freer today, but who knows what tomorrow will bring? I would not like to live in a country where tomorrow one may have to fear a knock at the door...”

Boris caught the last words of our conversation. He drew nearer:

“Even a Jewish newspaper is not permitted here!” he said.

“But there are Jewish concerts, aren't there?” she said.

“And where can you get a ticket to a Jewish concert? If there is an occasional Jewish concert, the tickets are sold out weeks in advance!”

“Oh, well, you had better serve the guests some vodka,” she said, bringing the discussion to an end.

THE MEN BEGAN to take their seats at the table. The aunts and cousins helped the hostess to bring the food from the kitchen. It was a cold supper. The table sparkled with a variety of dishes: white and black bread, meat, several kinds of smoked fish, black caviar, cheese, eggs. The guests raised their glasses and toasted:

"L'chaim! To your health!"

The Pioneers, Natasha, the Komsomol members and the non-Party young man with the camera, who sat near her, echoed:

"L'chaim!"

The hostess urged the guests to partake of the food, but they ate sparingly, carefully. "Don't think we eat like this every day!" my neighbor at the table murmured to me. Boris was the only one to attack the food with hearty abandon.

"We, in America, are more worried about the problem of how *not* to eat, about losing weight," I said.

"Why?"

"They say overweight causes heart attacks, all sorts of illness... who knows..."

"And here with us, you see, the only thing you're sure you own is what you put inside yourself," said Boris.

He drank down a glass of vodka and turned to me:

"You say you've come here directly from Israel," he said. "Have you by any chance met a certain Isaac Meyerovich Belkin?"

"Isaac?... Meyerovich?... Belkin?..."

"You see," he laughed. "There was an Isaac Belkin in our town. He owed money to everybody, and then he skipped, all the way to Tel-Aviv..."

"How did he get across the border?"

"Don't worry about Isaac Meyerovich! First of all, he had two daughters, and they married refugees from Poland. They left with their husbands for Poland, and from there they went

to Israel. Afterwards, Isaac Belkin himself followed them: to Lemberg, to Bessarabia, and then he found his way..."

"Isaac Meyerovich Belkin?..." I tried to recall. "But, of course, I met him! In Tel-Aviv!"

"How is he? How is he doing?"

"He has swindled half of Tel-Aviv already!"

"Oh, ho! Oh, ho!" Boris burst out laughing and rubbed his hands with glee. "Did you hear this?" he cried to his guests. "Our Isaac Meyerovich has already swindled half of Tel-Aviv!... Think of it! Half of Tel-Aviv!"

The Old Bolshevik smiled. Now she could hear even with her deaf ear. The Komsomol girl and the Pioneers raised their heads. They knew little Yiddish and caught only a few words. But something must have echoed in their memory: Cuba, Tel-Aviv, Lemberg.

The guests began to get up from the table. Sonia, the chemist, talked quietly in a corner with the cross-eyed artisan. The hostess found time now to taste some food herself. Boris joined her and helped himself to some more. I sat down with them:

"Why did Sonia have a nervous breakdown?" I asked.

"You did not hear that she ran about several years looking for a job and wasn't able to get one?" Boris replied.

"And maybe it was because she did not find a husband?" his wife glanced at him sideways with skeptically melancholy eyes.

WITH A DRINK OR TWO, one becomes bolder. After a few glasses of vodka, I joined the youngsters and started a conversation with Natasha, the Komsomol member. Swarthy, plump, with a youthful, fresh face, black eyes and long, heavy lashes, she resembled a Sephardic beauty. I inquired about her work at the labora-

tory and her plans to study medicine. As the daughter of a war-hero who died in the Patriotic War, she hoped to be admitted to the Medical Institute.

"How do you feel at work?"

"Good."

"I mean, how are you treated by your colleagues?"

"Very well, we are all on friendly terms with each other. My best friends are girls who work in our laboratory. We have mostly women there."

"And there is no discrimination against you because you are Jewish?"

The question did not surprise her. She had obviously heard of such things, perhaps discussed them with her family.

"In our laboratory you don't feel any difference between Jews and non-Jews," she said.

"Are there many Jews at your laboratory?"

"I am the only one among several dozen girls."

"Natasha says she is treated like everyone else," her mother said, appearing suddenly before us.

"The other girls even refuse to believe that I am Jewish," said Natasha.

The rest of the guests clustered around us and listened with interest. Natasha was slightly embarrassed. But it was obvious that she was pleased to be the center of attention. I turned the conversation to more pleasant topics.

"Would you marry a Russian, a non-Jew?" I asked her.

"If I fell in love with him?"

"Of course..."

"If I fell in love with him, I'd marry him. Love is more important than anything else!" she said, lowering her eyes.

"I don't like your reply, Natasha," I teased her. "If you had said that you would marry him because you are an internationalist and believe that there is no difference between a Jew and a Gentile, I could understand it. But 'love is more important...' That's non-

sense!"

"I am against mixed marriages!" said Boris.

"All right, all right!" his wife took him by the hand. "Just recently, he wrote to our elder son that, if he meets a fine Gentile girl, he may marry her."

"You don't understand it at all," Boris laughed. "Where is he going to find a *fine* Gentile girl out there?"

"Where do you get the materials for the bast shoes you make?" I asked the cross-eyed artisan.

We began to discuss the problem of an independent producer (a "relic of capitalism") in a socialized economy: the sources of raw materials, taxes, competition. At the door to the bedroom, a voice sang out a Jewish song:

"Bei mir bistu shein,

Bei mir..."

"You have Jewish records?" I asked Boris.

"No it's a kind of machine," he began to explain to me, and it transpired that he owned a tape recorder. I wanted to ask him where he had recorded this Jewish song, but the non-Party young man called out:

"Comrades, take your places! I am going to snap some pictures."

THE GROUP ARRANGED ITSELF for a family photograph. The place of honor was given to Aunt Tanya, the Old Bolshevik, who was lately the pride and glory of the family. Besides, she had suffered so much in her lifetime. Aunt Bashe was seated next to her, and around them the younger generation: children, grandchildren, cousins. The host and hostess linked their arms and bent their heads toward each other, like a bridal couple. The Pioneers squatted at the feet of their elders on the floor, Svetlana in the center, and the two boys on either side of her, their arms twined around her shoulders. The cross-eyed artisan stood a

little distance away—he was only a neighbor.

"Come over here!" several voices cried to me.

"Perhaps I'd better not be in the picture."

"Why?"

"I'm from the other side of the Curtain."

"Are you afraid?"

"Not for my sake... for yours."

"Nonsense! What foolishness!" Boris exclaimed. "Come here, stand near Zhenya!"

"Who knows what tomorrow may bring," I muttered.

The bulb flashed. The non-Party youth worked with gusto; he took four pictures. Afterward, he photographed Natasha alone. In the meantime, the Pioneers gathered around me. They wanted to hear about America directly from an American.

"Do American girls really walk around in *shortiki* all the time?" asked the thirteen-year old Svetlana (she was named after Stalin's daughter). The boys questioned me about more serious matters:

"Is it true that Negroes are lynched in America?"

"Is it true that Negroes are not permitted to ride in the same buses with whites?"

They listened earnestly and attentively as I explained about the differences between the "North" and "South," and told them about Harlem, about New York, where a Negro could eat at any restaurant, and about the progress made in recent years. Although they were constantly told at school and at Pioneer meetings that Negroes were always being lynched in America, they were nevertheless astonished to hear that the southern Negroes were indeed compelled to travel in separate buses or separate sections—so deep already was their mistrust of official sources.

They early developed the capacity for *doublethink*.

"What would you like to be when you grow up?" I asked the artisan's boy.

"An engineer."

"And you, Misha?"

"An electronics engineer."

"And Svetlana?"

"I don't know yet... Perhaps a biologist, although I love poetry, but I don't know..."

"Do all children here belong to the Pioneers?"

"All!" they answered in chorus.

"But those who are poor students, or misbehave, are thrown out," Misha added.

"And later, when you get older?"

"Then we join the Komsomol."

"Everybody?"

"Everybody."

"And then?"

"Then you join the Party."

"Why, then, is the Party membership so small?"

"Small? How big is it? Why?..." they mumbled.

THEY DID NOT KNOW. Perhaps Natasha would know? I wanted to talk to her about many things, ask her many questions. The non-Party young man was just then busy with his camera, and Natasha stood alone in the corner. I walked up to her.

"Would you like to have dinner with me at a restaurant?"

"Where? When?"

"Whenever you wish. At the *Nationale*, the *Metropole*, wherever you wish."

She was delighted. She had often eaten at cafeterias (*stolovaya*), but to dine with an American journalist in a famous restaurant, where music was played and where foreigners congregated!... Nevertheless, she hesitated a little.

"I alone?" she glanced at the other guests.

"Very well, Zhenya will also come. Zhenya!" I called to Aunt Bashe's youngest daughter, who was on the way to becoming an elderly spinster. "Would you come with us to a restaurant? The *Praga*, or the *Nationale*?"

Zhenya agreed at once and thanked me with a warm smile. Natasha's mother listened and kept an eye on her only daughter from the distance. Now she joined us.

"No, it's better if Natasha doesn't go," she said.

"Why not?" I wondered. "There would be three of us, Zhenya is also coming."

"Zhenya—that's a different matter. But Natasha...you understand?...A member of the Komsomol...And she wants to go to the Institute... she'll need a scholarship... No, it is best for her not to be seen at the synagogue..."

"What synagogue?"

"Didn't you say you want to take her to the synagogue on Saturday?"

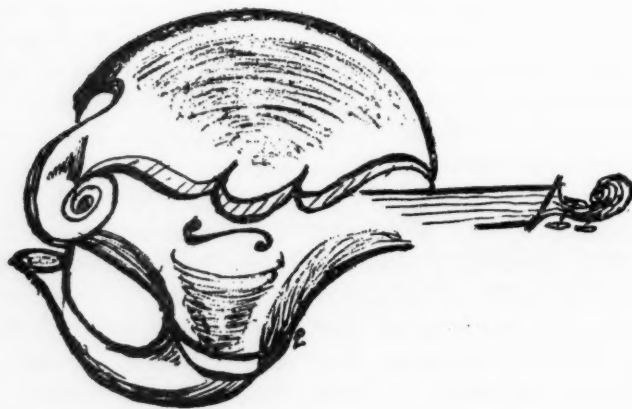
"Who spoke about synagogue? We agreed to have dinner in a restaurant, at the *Metropole*, or the *Praga*—dinner or supper..."

"Oh, a restaurant is different," the mother yielded. "If you insist..."

"I have many extra coupons anyway," I apologized. "All right, then, when do we go?" I asked my two young ladies.

"Tomorrow," said Zhenya. "You see, tomorrow is Sunday, we could have dinner at the *Praga*; then we can go for a stroll, and in the evening we'll go to a movie," she quickly drew up a plan, a kind of brief *pyatiletkha*. "I think they're showing an American film on Gorky Street."

The non-Party young man hurriedly folded his photographic equipment and joined us. He eyed us suspiciously: what had we done behind his back? He looked at Natasha and seemed to eat her with his eyes. "It's a match!" I thought, and recalled the famous Soviet election slogan: "Vote for the United Communist-Non-Party Slate!"



Love in Reverse

By YEHUDAH AMICHAI

JERUSALEM WAS LIKE A WOMAN who had loosened her hair for her lover. That is what old Jerusalem was like on the Tenth Anniversary. Before the Tenth Anniversary and its celebrations, we had not realized how long her hair was. And then long banners appeared, festooned pillars, colored streamers and heavy screens and people celebrating or preparing and rehearsing for the great joyous occasion.

Several times he, too, went out into the street, though burdened by despair, for he was still tied up in knots and heavy as a stone. If only he could untie his coiled despair it would be transformed into long tresses of joy. In the past he had tried to do so, but soon he would be caught up in the world and then he preferred to make his loose-flowing joy a coil of despair once again.

One of those evenings on which the high tide of the holiday preparations roared through the city, he left the home of friends where he had been a dinner guest. He returned home. But where was his home and what did it hold and what waited for him there? The bunch of keys in his pocket answered with a light jingle.

Groups of dancers could be seen here and there even though it was still a week or two before the great day. At the street corners platforms had been erected which reminded him of gallows from the days of the revolution, days of terrible joy. Rugs were hanging from windows, and empty lots covered with garbage and junk were hidden by cloth screens and wooden walls. The streets were becoming more and more like indoors, like a room, so that he had no desire to hurry back to his own room whose walls would remind him of his loneliness.

The evening was soft and submissive. Singing soldiers came up from the Valley of Rephaim. When they sang, their teeth gleamed in the darkness. He was drawn after the soldiers like a child and he marched in step with them. Later he left them. He went into a café and made several telephone calls. Final calls. Final arrangements. Final instructions. That's what he thought and he didn't know why. What had ended for him? What was to begin?

Perhaps this evening would bring him, like the last drowning man who is rescued, like Robinson Crusoe, to a desolate island where he would have to build a new life for himself. What would he take with him from his

YEHUDA AMICHAI is one of the outstanding writers of the younger generation in Israel. This story was translated from the Hebrew by Jules Harlow, a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary and a student of modern Hebrew literature.

former life? Where is the island? Perhaps he wouldn't reach it and would drown like the others.

He paid and left. A sudden wind shook the eucalyptus tree. It seemed to him this evening that the tree was not shaking but rather that the wind which had seized the tree was shaking. He cautioned himself against illusions. He would end up like Pharaoh who pursued the people of Israel, to have the divided sea fall on him from either side.

The night was like a soft mattress into which one sinks. He did not want to return to his house and he walked around until his knees trembled. Only then did he come near the house. Suddenly, in his great weariness, a strange thought glimmered: I will be sick, I will be sick! This thought stubbornly repeated itself until it became an obsession.

He took the bunch of keys from his pocket. They seemed to him more numerous than usual tonight. Then he took out one key, as an airplane about to land lowers a pair of wheels from its belly, thus he took out his key. He could not find the light switch at the entrance. He groped in the darkened stairwell until he found the stairs and the railing. And all this time the idea that he was going to be sick did not leave him. The railing was smoother and wider than usual. What had happened to the house? How it had changed!

His fingers found the door. The house appeared to be untenanted and he smelled fresh paint. The key also sought out the lock. Quickly and with a sleepwalker's confidence the key slipped into the narrow slot. A slight turn, a small squeek—and he stood inside. He knew at once that it was not his house nor his key, but since he was accustomed to living a life not his own he was not surprised and he did not ask and he did not retreat; he accepted his fate.

He shut the door quietly, but he was not able to prevent the final click from sounding. He listened, but there was no answer, for the house was empty and was filled only with great anticipation. The stillness clamped onto him. He stood motionless, breathing silently.

When he got his bearings, he realized that he was standing in a square ante-room. He took off his shoes and began to move along the walls as though he were in an ancient sepulcher filled with jewelry, and engravings upon the walls and ceiling.

Now he heard the sound of water dripping from a faucet. That faucet should be fixed! Hanging in the closet there were coats, soft and woolly and deep as all this wondrous evening; coats of a woman. A delicate fragrance of perfume assailed him. In the far distance he heard cars driving around and shifting gears. The sounds of the street seemed to have come through many walls and coats before reaching him. How could that be? He surely had not come that far inside. He surely had not sunk that far into a dream.

Suddenly he was filled with joy. The world was still alive. The tiny feather of his loneliness, which for many years had covered the mouth of the world, stirred. The world was alive. His life too had reached a turning point, just as the cars turning near the house had to shift gears. How would he get out of here? His groping fingers touched a small table made of a sheet of glass in an iron frame. There was a porcelain dish on the

table. Much paper rustled in the dish, foretelling another life for him. This hurt him. Whenever he touched upon other lives he felt a stabbing in his heart. This was a disorderly pile of papers, some of them rough and some of them smooth and silky like air letters from far away. His sickness mounted. How did the key happen to be among the other keys?

Then he stood still again and listened. The dripping stopped as if holding back in anticipation. He opened the door which had been the first to submit to him and he entered the room, already feeling that the square ante-room was his birthplace. But he stayed in the new room, found an easy chair and sat in it, hoping that not a thing would change, content to rest one hand upon the other as once he had seen medieval Christian knights made of stone, lying atop their tombs. Cars drove around at a distance of many walls. Here was the end of the world and the end of all his desires. Here he would wait.

He heard the sound of a key turning in the lock. His heart also turned. The door was opened and closed softly. Then he heard the rustle of many garments, as though many whispering, rustling women filled the square ante-room. A metal object was placed on the glass table. Paper rustled. A letter was added to the pile.

He knew that it was only one woman, for he heard her footsteps; a woman dressed in many rustling clothes, with wide hips and a large head.

Another door was opened. Water was running. Soap was put down. Jewelry was placed on glass. Everything set down with a clink was also set down on his heart.

He felt that only a thin wall stood between him and a life of which he was not yet aware. If all of this had been happening on a stage, the audience sitting in darkness would already have seen both of them. Joy and anticipation arose in his heart. Everything was understood and ready; when the door to the room opened, he was standing at her side. They came into each other's arms, mouth to mouth.

Moments earlier he had renounced everything, and now he accepted everything. Everything and nothing live in strange proximity.

For a moment they stood together. Then they realized that they could not stand thus, so they went to the other room, and still they had spoken but a few syllables. The light was not turned on. They sat on the bed. There was almost no sound, and no movement was made that was not large, accepting and final like the end of the world, and silent like this house at the edge of time. Her dress was freshly laundered and slightly starched, the fragrance of soap and of the passing breeze clung to her, and under her arms her own delicate provocative fragrance. He asked himself: What are we seeking in life? What have I sought and what have I wanted?

Then began the hurried untying and removing and putting down and throwing down. A watch was placed on a chest. Shoes and sandals dropped off with two heavy thumps and two light ones. These were the last hard sounds. Then rustling linen and blurred silk whisperings were heard. But these were already dim echoes and not from the world out of which he had come.

Once more the jingle of his keys could be heard, but not again. Thenceforth everything for him was soft and sinking, except for her protruding hip bones and except for the nipples of her breasts which were hard as thorns. She received him as her house had received him, and as had her ready body, without asking; as the sinking sun.

Afterward, too, they did not speak. Neighbors spoke instead. Suddenly he felt that the house was full of living people. The house was full because they had loved in it. Neighbors spoke and through the thin wall they heard the voices, the calming voice of a man and the questioning voice of a woman. They heard water in the walls and sometimes pipes moaned. A car and then another; all of them turning with a screech. Then came the end of the sounds at the end of the world. Her hand stretched from the bed to set the small clock, out of force of habit.

She awakened him before dawn. He at once knew everything, without wondering. He dressed quietly. The room was full of the woman's clothes, heaped like white foam. He took his watch. He examined his keys. He went out and walked down the stairs. One of the steps was broken; he would be careful next time. Once again he felt that no one lived in the house. Like one of the cars he turned the corner, a sharp screech in his heart. It was still dark and he walked home. Home? Home!

The next day he opened the mailbox and several envelopes fell into his hand: Greetings from the government on the Tenth Anniversary, and greetings from the Histadrut, and income tax, and municipal taxes, and the electric bill, and a letter from his friend who had already gone away or died. The last of the letters was a notice in which he was directed to report for duty as an orderly on the holiday, to protect the people from the parade and the parade from the people, that no vehicle should break out of the procession and run wild through the crowd. There is much confusion and disorder in the world. Because of this we need orderlies to bring order into the world. Even a day of joy and festivity is a day of tumult and confusion.

He arrived with all the other men of his unit and they received special, elegant uniforms. Military supplies were being distributed in the middle of the field. A place for headquarters had been designated amidst thorns and the smell of dried grass. The soldiers stood among the rocks and put on their uniforms, with lifting of arms and legs and gay shouts to one another, as at the resurrection.

He returned through the yard of an old age home which was on the way. Under the mulberry tree part of his uniform and the leather straps fell from his hands, near the mulberry tree, near one old woman who smiled toothlessly. Several old men sat at the gate, waiting for *Minchah*. When he passed among them they began to whisper with the other trees. The hanging paper decorations made a noisy rustling, sharp and shrill. In contrast, the cloth screens were heavy and made no sound except muffled explosions when the wind suddenly whipped through them. The heavy rugs which were hanging from the balconies were motionless and silent. They are heavy in their joy as though in mourning. They know.

Only a few days remained before the holiday. Were it not for the assignment which had fallen upon him and the uniform which had been

given to him and the straps with which he would harness himself at the holiday, he would have forgotten himself.

Did he continue going to that house at the edge of the world? Yes, he continued going there, and his wristwatch still did not help him in apportioning his time. Sometimes he thought clear words like: "I deserve it, I deserve it." Or words like: "Clearance sale, clearance sale. Everything must go! Nothing can remain." People always return to the same place. Even when their village has been destroyed in the roar and flame of a near-by volcano, they return to the same village. Wild animals long ago would have abandoned the doomed place, to seek out a new place.

More and more his entire body became involved in the precise and heavy activities of a dream. A dream of night has little effect upon a man. He wakes up and forgets the dream and returns to his day. A dream of night is only the activity of an outstretched hand. But a dream by day involves the entire body. The entire body is drawn along with the outstretched arm; it leaves its own course, drawn to byways which mortals have never tread.

The earth revolves. One learns this in school, though people do not sense it. But he who left to enter another world was aware of the revolving globe, and his life became insecure and full of love.

Did he continue going to that house at the edge of the world? He did continue. He let the keys decide. The key of the woman's house always won and was taken out first. The keys divided the world for him, jangling like the bell of a factory or school.

He had not planned to pass these weeks in this manner and not in the bosom of a woman at the end of the world. Many months before the holiday he had set up his own program, his own Tenth Anniversary celebration. He had wanted to take part in reunions with comrades from his division, company and unit. To travel to battle sites. To find what was left of trenches in which he had crouched in battle. To find them and to sit in them. A child would come over from the nearby *kibbutz* and stare at him with questioning eyes, not knowing that here, in this pit now covered with vines, sat a soldier amid bursting shells. And he had planned to get drunk one evening with several comrades from those days and suddenly to jump up, pound on the table and shout: "Lies, lies! All the stories about the War of Liberation are nothing but lies!" And he would keep shouting, that only very few took part in actual battles and that most of the people lived at the expense of the few and that there had been neither much volunteering nor a spirit of sacrifice in the big cities. Thus he had planned to conduct himself, and not otherwise. He would walk in the streets with a proud and slightly injured look, and would not participate in any official celebration whose main organizers would be army clerks, public officials and munitions dealers. With pride and ironic sadness would he conduct himself among the banners and the celebrants. That is how he had wanted to act.

But everything was different now. A miracle had befallen him. Life had befallen him. Every night he would sink down into this woman.

Every night the cars drove around, the house awoke from its enchanted slumber, the neighbors began to talk to each other and water sighed in the pipes. One evening he bought much wine. The two of them frequently sat in the darkness listening to all that moved without, and to all that moved within the blood. He repaired the faucet so that it no longer dripped at night; he repaired the closet door which had not shut properly; he repaired the rod of the white curtain and moved a heavy black chest from one room to another.

One night no water came from the faucet. He said that in Jerusalem this sometimes happens. And she said, "So little water under so many rocks!" Then he knew that she was not from here, that she came from far away. This was the first distinguishing mark that he noticed in her.

He frequently would see girl tourists. They would be sitting in cafés, some arranging their hair, pushing back a curl which had fallen on the smooth forehead. They would eat a roll and leave part of it on the plate. A map of the city would be on the table, along with colored picture postcards. Sometimes, when one of them was sitting alone, she would raise her head all of a sudden and stare out through many doors and days.

For some reason it seemed to him that only such a stranger could read his life like the map in front of her. Her having come from a distance would make it possible for her to know all of his life, like a picture which people understand only from afar.

For some reason he sensed obscurely that only a strange woman could redeem him, as in ancient days when nations chose a king from a foreign land to rule over them.

But the woman of the key was not one of these strangers who had come by sea or by air. She had not arrived that way and she would not leave that way. It seemed to him that she had come from the depths of the earth to arrive at this her final home. She was a native and a stranger at one and the same time.

The feeling of sickness had not left him. He still realized that there was no end to an end nor beginning to a beginning. It is doubtful that he even knew her name in those days. She did not know his name either.

He began to fear that he would be unable to hold onto his happiness. Out of the clarity which is so characteristic of the highly feverish mind it seemed to him that he was beginning to understand the terrible structure of this love. It was love in reverse, love which began in final anonymity, in sunset free of names, age and barriers, just two in the darkness. Love such as this could not wax, it could only wane. After the silent nights there would be days of seeing each other. They would know each other's name, and then there would be strolls together, walking arm in arm at twilight, kisses followed by caresses. And then less frequent meetings would be followed by chance meetings, and then letters and after them a few letters and after them that one lone letter which is the last or the first, had this been love in the proper order. And finally oblivion once more, only not as it was those first nights, but rather the oblivion of forgetfulness or of pre-awareness. Forgetfulness of the past and ignorance of the future are equal to the heart.

Thus he envisioned and thus he beheld his love. Love in reverse order. Once he wrote a letter and put it into an envelope but did not address it. He said: Let the post office clerk send the envelope wherever he wishes.

They began to take strolls together, but it is doubtful that any of his acquaintances saw them. These only remarked that they had not seen him for a long time. At times a desire to tell everyone he knew assailed him, to tell the truth and to flaunt it in their faces. But whatever the reason they kept their distance from him until the only thing that he had left was this miracle which was melting like snow in the heat of his love.

Out of a final effort to set things in order, and dimly, he divided his life into two periods: until now and from now on. Words were added. Conversations for two. She would suddenly say "I'll tell your mother," as children say while playing. What would she tell his mother? She would tell his mother that he is sweet, that she has a sweet son. He called her big conch-shell, pink witch, mouth of the earth. And she called him my stricken deer.

Sometimes she did not complete her sentences. She would stop in the middle of a statement, leaving him hanging with a final conjunction followed by nothing. She would say something and conclude with "because..." or "since..." or "so as not to..."

At first he urged her to finish what she was saying; then he tried to finish it himself into a sentence. Then he neither delved into nor thought about it and he saw in these remnants a sign that she would remain with him, for she could not leave his life without finishing what she had been saying.

The holiday drew near. But he paid it no regard, for he knew what a true holiday was. The streets were filled. People were in the streets after midnight, people carrying drums and accordions after a party.

Once they passed near the square, where a loudspeaker had been set up for the coming celebrations. Then she whispered to him that she loved him. Or she told him something like that with her remote tongue. She was afraid that the loudspeaker would magnify her words, but it did not. An engineer tested it and blew into the microphone and counted slowly: One, two, three, four, like the terrible, fateful time.

To go by his reverse love, they should have been counting four, three, two, one, concluding with the beginning which is the end.

They sat at a table in a café. The waitress came over and said: Maybe you could pay now; I have to leave. And she left. The holiday drew near. In an empty shack someone was practicing on a trumpet. A car passed by, carrying a man who was weary from all the preludes to rejoicing. The number of tourists in the city had grown. The tourists looked at the two and said: This really is the land of love. She told him that in the summer she would make a cotton dress on which his likeness would be stamped, like flowers. And still he did not see her completely, for she covered his eyes and the seven years of war in his life.

One night, when he heard her strange moanings as he came in unto her, he suddenly thought again in a source of inner anguish: I deserve it! I deserve it! I deserve it! And in the quiet of afterwards he said: Until

now I have carried life; now my life has become independent and mature and it shall carry me.

The cars drove around and the house awoke to the sound of human voices and the sounds of water at midnight. The window was latticed, but in the years that followed he forgot and did not remember whether the window was latticed or not.

One evening, when the key again brought him to her house, she was not there. He waited and waited but she did not come. He did not hear her key turning in the lock and did not hear the tune which she sometimes would hum to herself slightly off-key, like a squint that adds charm to a woman. He remained sitting in the easy chair. He heard several shots and he felt history passing among the living, like the blind in a city of people who can see.

He asked himself: Does it hurt? Does it hurt already? And his mind was not at ease until he could respond: Yes, it really hurts—like a doctor who sometimes finds it necessary that the patient suffer pain for the sake of the diagnosis.

Then he walked about in the room, feeling the furniture with his fingers. Then he lay down on top of the carpet, like a wounded animal. But he clutched at the legs of the bed as a fugitive clutches the corners of the Temple altar. Then he took off his wristwatch and undressed and lay down on the bed. His final thought was that he was resting like chairs in a restaurant, at night, when they are placed atop tables, their legs pointing to the ceiling.

Toward morning he awoke and saw that the woman had not come to her house that night. He got up. The closet door opened as if by itself. He saw that all of her clothes were still there and he was relieved. Everything was in disarray: dresses and underclothes, stockings and sweaters, blouses and handkerchieves. The large black suitcases stood quietly against the opposite wall, and the large mirror which held her image held his face in the first dim light of the day before the holiday.

In the late noon hours all the men of the unit who had to serve as orderlies gathered at the meeting place, a side street on which only the rear of the holiday could be seen. Contrivances and scaffoldings, rolled up banners, unopened trunks, eyebrows of men who were staring somewhere else, a tangle of electric cord, spools of barbed wire, small tents, and everything destined to be refuse the day after tomorrow, and many posters tossed in a heap, reading: For holders of green tickets. No admittance! Stop! Entrance to platform 8. Temporary gas station—and many other posters which had come to replace the six hundred and thirteen commandments that day. Soldiers ran back and forth, asking about meeting places. Three stern looking policemen passed by on motorcycles. On both sides of the street jars of preserves were opened and thrown onto the highway. Left-overs of bread at entrances to houses had already begun to dry up and in the empty lot between the houses two men were crouching over a small fire.

In the school site designated as the meeting place, tables had been moved around in order to make room for a dormitory for the soldiers. A group of women soldiers who had also been appointed to serve as orderlies would

sleep in an adjoining room. Several of them had already put down their packs, taken off their berets, and were shaking out their hair, while laughing. Some were straightening out their uniforms and pulling at their unsightly skirts which pinched their hips, and laughed. At night one of the soldiers, he of the brown eyes—it was not certain whether his eyes were brown or maybe yellow—one of the soldiers will go into the corridor and meet one of the girls and say to her: It smells of chalk here. And she will also be reminded of school days and they will go into the empty faculty room and kiss each other near the calendars, near the stuffed raven with glass eyes.

As an officer, he was not required to sleep in the schoolhouse. After he attended to his men and gave them assignments, he went down into the yard. It was filled with soldiers from other units. He went over to the faucets and drank the jet of water which rose from the inverted faucet.

He wiped the drops from his mouth and thought about the woman. Where is she now? If she is not at home, where is she? He walked past his house and heard an explosion and heard men who were standing on the roof tops shouting: Look at the green fireworks! He did not see a thing, for the tall houses hid the sky. He would not watch, and he would not get drunk, and he would not pound the table top with his fist, and he would not shout: Lies, lies, it's all a lie! He thought of all the things which had slipped through his hands, of the things which were in his possession and of those which were not. He saw his life as an *Haftorah* that is read on the Sabbath in the synagogue, which he had attended as a child. The *Haftorah* must contain some allusion to what is written in the portion for that day. Sometimes a slight allusion is sufficient, merely the name of a person or a place. His life was like that, with only slight, superficial hints of his true life.

Like a Hanukkah top he was spinning and spinning until he would fall, with only one letter showing, no more.

The streets were empty, for everyone had gone to see the dances and the fireworks. A final group of dancers brushed by him like ghosts and disappeared into the light. The President's car, accompanied by fearful wailing, passed by in the street, and then he was left alone. Say not that he was sad on a holiday. Say not that he was too proud to rejoice with the masses. That man who was not pulled into the light had his reasons, reasons which were strangely mingled with ten years of the state.

That night there was not even one house to which he could return. He walked to a kiosk on the corner and asked for a glass of soda. An old man served him, for all the young people had joined the celebrations. The old man said to him: "You have a secret on your mind. Wash it down." He smiled and drank and smiled again and walked away. It would have been better to stay by the lighted window of the kiosk and to continue smiling. But it was really impossible to stay there, and he continued walking. He saw that a window in the house which he had always found darkened was lit up for the first time. The woman was lying in her bed and she said to him:—Please prepare some prunes and white rice for me; I have an upset stomach. He went to the kitchen and lit the gas stove and put the

pan of prunes and rice over the flame. Then he took a Dutch plate and filled it with the food and brought it to her. He thought that he was like Jacob bringing delicacies to his blind father. Thus he entered the room and served the woman lying in darkness and waited for her blind blessing. Her hair was long. Cars were not driving around and no sounds were stirred up in the house. They heard the exploding fireworks. He sat on the edge of the bed. Her hair was long and touched the ground. He knew that it was a mistake to call the floor ground. He was always very careful to speak correct Hebrew. But in the woman's room the floor was ground, earth. The earth of all life. Even when it was covered with smooth, colored tiles.

He fed her with one hand while his other hand held her hair as someone might hold a curtain open in order to look out. He took a good look: Her face was a broad expanse. Then he closed the curtain of her hair. She left a little food in the plate. He put the plate on the ground which gave the appearance of floor. Then he touched her face with the palms of his hands. When he drew them away, he saw that they were wet. He asked her why she was crying. She answered him that she was crying because she knew that he would hurt her and because she was angry that she was crying. The people came back from the fireworks and he left her. She sat up in her bed, leaning on her hands with only the upper half of her body raised. She looked at him even after he had gone. He knew that he had to leave her and go home. Were he to remain with her he would forget his love, and it would be forgotten, like a man who sets out to scale a wonderful high mountain—were he to stay atop it, his experience would lose its meaning. He must return to people and tell them about it. This night he did not dream about his comrades who had fallen in the war, as he had intended to dream. He did not dream at all, for he did not sleep. The fireworks and the dances had stopped outside—and they commenced within him.

Early in the morning he went out to carry out the assignment which he had been given. Jerusalem seemed to be tired and her hair was unkempt. The first revellers had reached the streets. One window was already decorated with the head of a small girl. His soul was like a truck full of empty bottles. They rattled because they were empty. But he knew that they would be refilled and his soul would be calm and very heavy.

Since early morning one lone man had been sitting by himself on the ancient wall near the highway. He was very thin and his face was already turned toward the route which the marchers would take in the afternoon. All that time he did not stir from his place. However, one hour before the start of the parade he suddenly disappeared. The ways of man are strange. A man abandons his place, gives it up, and others take it.

Niches and balconies were filled with girls and families and impatient card players. First aid stations were set up. Young doctors, in white gowns, strutted among girls who had come to help the helpers. People were being pushed along through open courtyards and winding alleys, governed by the same law which applies to the flow of blood within the body and outside of it. Arguments began over places and over chairs which had been set

up before daylight. The orderlies attempted to calm them down and to settle the arguments. The girl soldiers pushed their heavy hair beneath their berets and directed the people in directions which they did not want to follow.

The unit's medic came over to him and the two of them slipped away for a little while to drink a cup of coffee. They sat near the counter on high stools, their feet dangling. They spoke about the woman in the house at the edge of the world. There were no mirrors in the café; only the metal coffee maker, in which their reflections were distorted. Suddenly he asked the doctor: What do we want out of life? What are we seeking? The doctor was startled. He had studied for many years and knew how to answer a variety of questions, but who knows what people want out of life? They stirred the coffee. Then unconsciously they switched cups. They got down from the stools and each one paid for the other's coffee, for they were elated and confused on account of that woman. They were like two roses on one stem. They went out into the street. He wanted to ask the world where its weak spot was, as they had asked Samson. He felt that the powerful world was almost like a human being.

Close to parade time his friend came over, the one who had been through the wars with him. This friend hid his eyes behind dark sunglasses; the world would have a darker view of him. He was always sad. The more he succeeded the sadder he became. His sadness was his fortress and from that fortress he looked at the world through the sunglasses.

Now they sat at the edge of the sidewalk on a side street behind the wall of people that faced the parade route. They sat beside the murky still waters of the twisting, swirling festival, among barbed wire and cast off paper and peelings. Dust covered them. His friend spoke in a hoarse voice. When he called his attention to the hoarseness of his voice, his friend answered that he was not hoarse from his own shouting, but from the shouting of the world around him. They spoke about their generation of two wars, a generation which had no time to adjust: always early, always late. He said to his friend: But we deserve it, we deserve it.—What do we deserve?—We deserve it!

Thus the two were sad as two dogs standing near a tree. Then they returned to their duties and the festival rolled on down the street.

In the evening he went to see if the woman had recovered. She had. Her eyes were slightly crossed and her lips were full and her mouth was large and almost the shape of a brick. Her head resembled the head of the Queen of Egypt, Nefrititi. Her nose was elongated and her nostrils dilated in order to breathe in his fragrance and that of the world. She said that on the next day he would suffer a total eclipse. He repaired the shutter and then he ate and drank and was silent. He would continue to live, out of habit. He would continue to live as a child continues sobbing long after the source of pain has been forgotten.

Summer arrived several days later. One morning a wagon carrying blocks of ice passed by them, and a young boy cried out in a voice to end all voices: Iceman! Iceman! Women and children came down from near-by houses. From then on those calls of Ice, Ice, were frequent because summer had suddenly come upon the city.

Sometimes while he walked alone in the street the ice wagon would silently steal up behind him and pass him by without anyone's shouting, Ice. After that, this wagon became a death wagon, grey and dirty, with thin jets of liquid trickling from the corners like blood from a slain man's mouth. This was a death wagon, like the ambulances that accompany the advancing army amidst clouds of soaring dust.

The celebrations continued outside. But the house still protected them like a plaster cast. Later they would recuperate from the fracture. Which fracture? The house would be taken from them and they would leave. Where would they go? Bit by bit the enchantment of the bewitched house was undone. Talk had been stirred up in it, and not only after midnight, but during all the hours of the day and the evening; the sounds of children and the sound of heavy steps on the stairs. The balconies were filled with clothes hung out to dry. In addition, construction had begun on a new house behind the house in which they had loved and which they had thought to be the end of the world, beyond which was nothing. And the street was extended, and cars no longer turned around near the house at night.

It seemed to him that during those days at the start of the summer they had been at the shore together. But he was not sure of this, for at that time the bond of their love had already loosened and letters had already been sent, for theirs had indeed been a love in reverse.

It seemed to him that they had been at the shore, that hand in hand they had run across the sand still bereft of people, that they had run thundering like galloping horses, hair flying, to the ruins of the ancient pillars by the sea. The soles of their feet were black with pitch and they were clinging gently to each other, near the sea, where the hotels go down to the shore and fishing nets are spread out to dry.

After that they were in Jaffa or in Acco and they walked in the footsteps of children, hiding and going into the courtyard of a house; then they went inside the house and saw that the sea dwelled on the bottom floor, that it went up and down in the rooms with the motion of the waves outside.

But they did not have the blind confidence of the first silent nights, the nights of the end which for them actually was the beginning which brought them to the true end and past it.

For a man may leave a house, but the house does not leave him. He is still there, with its walls and everything that hangs on them, with its rooms and with its doors which are carefully closed, or the house expands and becomes highways on which he who left the house will walk.

The summer waxed and the celebrations were drawn out endlessly. Due to their joy, people celebrating did not have time to lift their heads before a new wave of joy came to engulf them again.

He looked at the city and at the color of its banners. He looked at the city whose costs of destruction and rebuilding he bore, as all its children. Sometimes he wanted to sink as she had, with prophets prophesying and flames and clouds of smoke.

He often went to the new swimming pool. When he checked his

belongings and his clothes, he received a numbered tag in exchange. It always happened that way in his life as well. He checked many things whenever he wanted to be naked and alone: Loves and memories of entire days, one night, a fragment of a conversation, a feeling here, an intuition there. Sometimes he would lose the numbered tag, or he would forget where he had checked his belongings and in the end he would give up and forget about it altogether. Only sometimes, at night, the band on the tag would press against his hand and he would toss from side to side and would not doze off. He would turn on the light and see the number marked upon the tag and would be alarmed. Then he would doze off again, like Pharaoh, to a new and terrible dream.

And once again their love flared up as at the start. It was like a coda at the end of a symphony, which recalls the lovely themes of the beginning, before the end. Thus their love of the first nights returned, as if to prove everything and to declare: This is the way it was and it will never be this way again.

The house remained where it was. But since they had stopped loving in it, it became as blemished, bare, and mortal as any house. Did the woman stay in the house? He frequently asked himself this question, but his bunch of keys did not answer with a jingle and that small key was not drawn out again in order to solve his life, to decide for him. The ice wagon often passed him by, even in places where there were no apartment houses, and no women carrying baskets.

The woman sat in her easy chair. The chair was deep as the clouds of heaven and red as hellfire. Where was it? Perhaps in her house. It was even possible that it was in the middle of the street, the woman sitting in it with her head leaning to one side in heavy fatigue. Her head was like fruit on a tray and her hair flowed down along the back of the chair, almost to the ground. And perhaps in the course of time people and vehicles had become accustomed to the easy chair in the middle of the street and they went around it as if it were an island, or the municipal workers put a metal plaque and a burning flare in front of her, as they do when the street is under repair.

The house remained with all the houses. Water flowed through its pipes, but love had ceased in it. The door of the woman's apartment stayed shut, but one day, on the Sabbath, in the afternoon, a commotion began behind the walls of the other apartments, a commotion of wrath and glowing fury, a commotion of vengeance, rebellion and jealousy. The commotion steadily mounted. At first in the pipes and in the glowering stoves and within the closets and then in the hearts of the men and women who lived there. All of the terrible and devouring inquisitiveness, all the jealousy and hate which had accumulated behind the doors of the house began to boil as though inside pressure cookers and to force out a path for themselves until the windows rattled and doors quaked in their frames. How had it begun?

It is hard to know. Perhaps this began in all of the apartments at one and the same time according to mutual agreement in fury and jealousy.

The fat squat woman who was a teacher in the school for problem children was among the first. The two lovers had never seen her but now she appeared time and again. She was standing in her kitchen when suddenly she jumped over to the door of the apartment, opened it, and listened. Since she did not hear a thing, she brought her sense of smell into play, and wrinkled her thin, sharp nose and said: Fire, Fire! She said it in a whisper as if to convince herself. Then she raised her voice slightly and said it again, Fire, Fire—and she closed her door excitedly. Then she entered the room and awakened her husband who was lying down, a newspaper covering his face like a monument over a grave. He arose from under the newspaper, revived, and he also shouted "Fire, Fire!" before knowing what really had happened.

"Where is the fire?"

"In the apartment of that-one, those-over-there, that-one." The husband awoke and a strange light was kindled in his eyes. He buttoned up his trousers, pulled at his shorts which had wrinkled up in back and strode out. Thus onward strode the hunter to the forest. When all is said and done he too was a hunter.

The two burst out to the stairway. They rang at the door of the strange woman. After ringing, they began knocking, then knocking and pounding, and finally they kicked fiercely at the door.

"You still don't smell anything?"

"Smell? What?"

"The smell of fire and smoke."

The stairway began to fill up with half-dressed people dashing about. All the tenants had looked forward to this for many weeks. And now they all came: The thin man who works at the Jewish Agency and the aging bachelor and the girl holding a doll in her hand and many others. There seemed to be more people there than lived in the house, women and children and a great multitude. And already many shouts of Fire! and, Smoke! could be heard.

"She's endangering our house!"

"We'll all die on account of her!"

"She undoubtedly didn't turn off the iron, undoubtedly didn't turn off the stove."

"Witch, tramp, hussy. She didn't turn off her heart!"

"I saw a goy who came to pick her up."

"A goy with a blonde mustache? Boy! I saw plenty!"

"They sent her flowers every day. And since she wasn't in her apartment, they hung the flowers on the door knob and the whole house is filled with flowers!"

"The flowers rotted and smelled up the place!"

"And dirtied up the house!"

"Maybe she committed suicide?"

"Maybe she ran away?"

"She is not a Jew at all!"

"Who knows, maybe she's a spy!"

"Once I saw her jump from the window, her hair streaming something awful."

"She rode a horse; she walked around in her apartment naked!"

"She rode a motorcycle, noising around on days of rest!"

"She used to hang her underwear on the line in front of husbands and boys."

"She sang after midnight!"

"She played the guitar!"

"Where is she? Where did she go?"

Because of these shouts they forgot the fire and the smell of the fire that never was. And since they already had begun, they continued storming about. The door was broken down with one blow. It sounded like an explosion. It was not opened as it had been opened on the first night, with a slight whisper and with the turning of a thin key to the wondrous destiny of love and white clothes.

The indignants poured into the square ante-room which filled up at once. The woman's coat was torn from the hanger, the glass table was smashed when a fat man sat on it after the exertion of the outburst. *Mazel Tov!* they shouted, and the splinters were trampled underfoot. Someone cut his finger. Blood flowed. Blood!

This shout was both a call to arms and battle cry. In the kitchen a bank clerk found a half-eaten apple, marked with lipstick, which aroused his lust and he left the kitchen all agog, his eyes bulging from their sockets.

"She committed suicide."

"She ran away through the latticed window."

"She didn't even clean up her room."

"Whore! Tramp! Witch!"

In her room books were ripped from the bookshelves and thrown down. Letters were torn up after they tried in vain to decipher what was written in them. Someone cried out, *Call the Police!* But another pointed out that it would not be wise, since they had broken into the apartment.

"It's all right to break into the apartment of a woman like this."

"It's all right to steal from a thief."

The avengers reached the bedroom.

Drawers were forced open, a mirror was cracked, a curtain fell. One woman held up a pair of dainty underpants like a tattered battle flag. The madness of snatching and throwing, of ripping silk and nylon overcame them. The ravenous hunger of their terrible lusts. Empty perfume bottles were tossed about and trampled on. A black shoe was tossed out of the latticed window through which the two had looked when they raised themselves slightly from the bed to see the tree on the hill. But the neighbors finally tired, for the small apartment appeared big to them because they had travelled immense distances in the great world of the two lovers. At last each one of them sat down. Panting mouths were open wide; closets were open wide, and empty. Conversations ceased. No shouting could be heard, and one by one they returned to their apartments by the long road which has no end. This was the end of love in the house and the end of the house.

The two who had found each other in the house on the night of nights were never in it together again; they were not together anywhere. They

were already immersed in the great forgetting which exists before events and after them and they awaited each other as one waits for someone still unknown, someone who lives in the burning imagination and in dreams. And they foretold their past and their future, each one in his place. And they used all those short words, such as already, still, not yet, before, a little more, afterward, once—all those short words which melt in life and sweeten it or add bitterness like wormwood.

And so it happened that one day he was sitting in the garden of the King David Hotel. The Israel flag waved in the center of the roof, the French flag to the right, and the weather instruments to the left. Opposite him stood the cypress trees which hid the Old City. In the late afternoon they began to play. A brazen lady pianist and a sad violinist came out on the balcony; but their music was scattered by the winds. What do people want out of life? He did not ask it in a loud voice, for he sat alone. They were calling people to the telephone. They called them over the loud-speaker. "*G'veret Tufel, b'vakashah l'telefon.*" Or in English, "*Meester Kleinman, telefon pleez.*" Sometimes someone got up after the announcement and sometimes no one got up. And it gives one something to think about how people wander and come from distant places and meet by chance. Chance gives way to destiny. Sometimes chance can choke a man. Sometimes it is possible to feel the stitching between chance and destiny. Sometimes the stitching is soft and sometimes it is hard and coarse. And then destiny again becomes chance and it ends only at the end.

The woman sat in the easy chair, turning the pages of a thick book. Every turning of a white page looked like wings trying to fly. How did she come by her slanting eyes and her elongated head? This time her long hair was piled high in thick curls atop her head.

Once more his thoughts were like two roses on one stem. And he knew that from now on there would be only letters and later empty pages and later the after-forgetting which is like the forgetting-of-before.

The switchboard operators changed. A girl with a soft, deep voice was now on duty. He wanted them to call him, too, but they did not. For him the year of celebrations had ended and with it the year of the hair undone which fell loosely to the hips. He felt that he was close to the heart of the year and he could hear it beating, more and more faintly, like retreating footsteps.

THE SPIES

By DAVID GALLER

(the grapes of Canaan)

Up from the wilderness, whose hallowed ground
Under His pillar had kept our hordes in bound,
We climbed the mountain's crags without a sound.

Resplendent weather gilded each chasm's jaw;
Descending to climb high, once more we saw
The boundlessness and good of Unnatural Law.

Blessed by our progress up terrain so bleak
Graced with His challenges, we struck the peak.
Our labor in part so made it we could not speak.

Verily worn. And yet, the land was there,
Cunningly peaceful, more oppressively fair
Even than Moses' dream when he wrenched his hair.

Even those works which rise not from God's hand
May differ from how they seem. Spying that land
For forty days we were guests of each simple band.

Sworn fast to the finding of perfect argument
Against wine, fruit, caresses in every tent,
It was at last our own rags that we rent.

Now, in the shame attributed to His will,
We thrust off gifts, invoking our desert skill,
Yet bore one token they claimed should all fulfill.

This was the branch of grapes the size of stone,
Which, as we balanced between their land, our own,
Weighed on our vision and left us most alone:

Divided by lusts we could not well refute
And grim resolve to never retrace that route,
We were supported whole by the brazen fruit.

As they had said, this treasure fulfilled all:
Descending, we planned deceptions to forestall
Israel in its hopes; likewise, with gall

We cursed those self-starved heathens. In their camp,
We knew not which of our words might bear Whose stamp.
The crowd of grapes loomed near us like a lamp.

Partly to shield, partly to mock, incite,
We warned of walls, giant multitudes to fight,
A ravenous earth that sucked its parasite.

Their murmurs rose. Savagely we upheld
We had stood as grasshoppers before who dwelled.
We knew not by their stones would we be felled.

Now came the wails. And now, to our amaze,
The wrath of Moses—but traded, gaze for gaze.
All we had said: full knowledge of our days!

Swollen like clouds, the grapes burst. By their gleam
We doubled before those who shall not redeem,
To claw God's desert beneath that spoiling stream.

ANCESTORS

By ISABELLA FEY

Who among us is not descended from Stone Age men?
Are we not all the sons of sorcerers who died hunting?
Did we not all outline great shapes upon cold rock
And spear fish in forgotten starvations?
And later, did we not share in the prophetic stock
When, east, west, our common forefathers announced new religions?
Even now, who of us cannot reckon a king or a half-king for ancestor?
Dare I forget them, O Jerusalem,
When from me may issue the hanged man
And from my brother perhaps a risen god?

By PARIS LEARY

SAUL TO JONATHAN

(for T.G., on the death of his father)

But what in times of grief had sung
to me turned daemon and that liquid harp
changed to a wilder tempo and speech
was torn in its furious music
I had no words for you then
only the madness growing and the mad
music drinking me until
I was the music and the madness
I had no words for you then
I could not touch you in my dance
of death I spun so wildly past
And now in the stillness all the music
silenced and the madness cooled
I reach over my still body
to touch your hand your man's hand
and to say cleanly the words I could not
say before My son My son

THE BOY ROLLY

is playing with a ragged matzoh
and a rusty dump-truck
while flies suck applesauce
at Irwin's baby mouth
Their mother Miriam holds a guitar
and drinks Concord wine
as the moving-men negotiate
her departure and divorce
from Arty who has left with Nina
in Stuey's Chevrolet
The Bronx has the harsh clarity
of a theorem
but moving in its nervous summer
like a breakdown the sun
makes traffic problems with landfall
at the end of every street

JOSEPH LYONS is a psychologist on the staff of the Veterans Administration Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky. His review, "This Self-Conscious Nation," appeared in our Summer 1960 issue.

In Two Divided Streams

By JOSEPH LYONS

THERE IS A SONNET, cast in bronze, on the wall inside the base of the Statue of Liberty. We are all familiar with its stirring lines:

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

The title of the poem is "The New Colossus." Its author is Emma Lazarus. She wrote the poem in 1883 to aid a

fund then being raised to furnish the pedestal for the huge statue which the French people were preparing as a gift to their American friends. Twenty years later the philanthropist Georgina Schuyler had the lines cast on a plaque and permanently enshrined within the statue's base as a fitting statement of its meaning to the world.

This is all there is today of Emma Lazarus' fame. The body of her poetic work, two volumes in all, has been forgotten. Her essays are buried in the pages of such forgotten magazines as *Lippincott's* and *Century*. She has even suffered the insult of critical misidentification: as recently as 1940 Louis Adamic, otherwise a knowledgeable critic, referred to her as "a 19th century immigrant poet," although in fact she belonged to one of New York's most distinguished families of Sephardic Jews. That she was a leader of the intellectual life of her day, a well-known translator of Goethe, Petrarch, and Heine as well as of a number of medieval Hebrew poets of Spain, is no longer even mentioned. Yet she was this and more—writer, essayist, pamphleteer, reformer, traveler, critic, and one of the first American leaders of the Zionist cause.

WHEN SHE DIED, Edmund Clarence Stedman, himself a distinguished man of letters, wrote sadly,

"A princess is fallen in Israel." He was her lifelong neighbor and friend; and his grief was perhaps the more acute because he had been witness, even midwife, to the series of events which completely changed the course of her life when she was already past thirty. Once when visiting him she bemoaned the fact that she had, as she put it, done "nothing that the world could not equally do without." Raised most properly in the family of a wealthy merchant of cultivated tastes, she had been educated by private tutors, and in 1867, at the age of eighteen, she had seen her first precocious volume, *Poems and Translations*, privately printed by her father. Emerson himself was impressed by the promise it showed and invited her for a visit; it began a friendship and tutelage that was only faintly expressed in her dedication to him of her next volume of poems. Of the effort in prose which followed, a fictionalized version of Goethe's first love entitled *Alide: An Episode*, Turgenev wrote in commendation from across the Atlantic. But she felt that nothing she had done was what the world wanted. Then Stedman suggested that she consider why she had always been so indifferent to the special "vantage-ground" that she had as a Jewess. She thought about this and then replied that perhaps she was proud of her blood and lineage—and rightfully, too, for hers was noble stock among nineteenth century Jewry—but that "Hebrew ideals" did not appeal to her. When she was asked, at about the same time, to contribute some writing for a Jewish hymnbook, her response was the same: "I feel no religious fervor within me."

Stedman's suggestion was far from casual. Like other thoughtful Americans, he had only recently been aroused by a shocking report appearing in the *London Times* of January, 1881.

It told of nine months of increasingly widespread persecution of Jews that had been occurring over large areas of eastern Europe. Then in March of the same year Alexander II of Russia, "The Czar of Liberation," was assassinated by a Nihilist group which contained at least two Jews. This was excuse enough, and an even greater storm of persecutory violence arose. One immediate result was that thousands of Russian Jews fled to the freedom of America. They arrived on Ward's Island in a steady stream of tired, poor, homeless refugees, and very soon they became the special object of the charity of New York's wealthy Jews.

It was here that Miss Lazarus saw her fellow Jews for the first time. Perhaps because she was a writer rather than a reader, this was the scene that finally moved her. As it happened, she had just that month published in *The Century Magazine* a piece written some time before, a most intelligent and persuasive discussion of Disraeli's character. "Was the Earl of Beaconsfield a representative Jew?" she asked; and she concluded, in cool and reasoned prose, that he was indeed—but of course representative of the Sephardim and not of the Ashkenazim. "He knew himself," she wrote, "to be the descendant, not of pariahs and pawnbrokers, but of princes, prophets, poets, and philosophers." Her argument was that Disraeli's character was a perfect expression of the pre-eminent Jewish trait: the trick of taking advantage of every situation and, "with marvelous adroitness, to transform their very disabilities into new instruments of power." Here indeed was a strange defense of a Jew by a Jew. It was rather a device of Gentile snobbery poorly concealed. There is no coincidence in the fact that at about the same time a review of her newly published translations of Heine's poems and ballads acknowl-

edged her "delicate apprehension" of the German writer's style and manner but pointed out that it lacked any statement by a Jew about Heine as a Jew. She was at the stage in which her writing displayed that conspicuous disclaiming which so often besets the Jew become minimally conscious of his fate.

BUT ALL THIS CHANGED at a stroke when she began her visits to Ward's Island. The vantage ground that Stedman had suggested was suddenly revealed to her; she had been standing on it. And now by a turn of chance there appeared in the same issue of *Century* as her paper on Disraeli a long article by one Mme. Z. Ragozin, entitled "Russian Jews and Gentiles." Miss Lazarus must have read this remarkable effort with more than passing interest, for it consisted of a spirited defense of the current pogroms. Editorially, the magazine itself took the stand that the article contained "extremely medieval" charges but that thoughtful Americans, recalling the recent anti-Negro riots in New York as well as the numerous anti-Chinese incidents that had already occurred in San Francisco, could not afford to remain ignorant of the views which informed such movements.

Mme. Ragozin's argument was satisfyingly simple. She began by describing in cozy detail the actions of the rioters in a number of towns of southwest Russia, depicting them as self-controlled and high-minded avengers whose motto was "The Jews have lorded it over us long enough!" To this she added: "It is a fact so well known in Russia as to need no repetition or argument that it is in part the merciless and systematic 'exploitation,' or, as the people so graphically describe it, the sucking out of the country's blood by the Jews, which has brought the peasantry of the West to the depths of

destitution." This "fact," which if well known would hardly have required much supporting evidence, was then justified at great length by the purported evidence contained in a volume called *The Kahal*, by Jacob Brafmann. Upon his conversion to Christianity he had published these revelations on the basis of 285 documents supposedly stolen for him by "a Jewish friend" from the rabbinical archives at Minsk. Brafmann's thesis, badly worn even in the nineteenth century, was that the Jews form a secret clique which is dominated by a dictatorial inner council whose single aim is to penetrate and control the economic life of the nation.

The guiding attitudes of this apologist may be judged from her deliberate slap at contemporary ideals of democracy. "It is time," she remarked, "to drop the sentimental liberal slang." The Jews are never really persecuted, she insisted. It is only that at some point the apathy of the public is overwhelmed, and then they turn on their tormentors. "The Jews are disliked, nay, hated in those parts, not because they believe and pray differently, not because they are a parasitical race... They are despised, not because they are of different blood, because they dress differently, eat peculiar food; not even because, herding together in unutterable filth and squalor, they are a loathsome and really dangerous element... but because their ways are crooked, their manner abject,—because they will not stand up for themselves and manfully resent an insult... but will take any amount of it if they can thereby turn a penny, will smirk and cringe, and go off with a deadly grudge at heart..." The closing note might perhaps have moved anyone who was not taken in by a "liberal press" which was dominated by world Jewry: she contrasted the cruel, ruthless, underhanded Jew with "that compound of

Grecian refinement and Teutonic manliness which we call modern culture."

HERE, FINALLY, was a vantage ground upon which a writer could take a stand—even a writer who had hinted at similar views in discussing Disraeli. Miss Lazarus dashed off an immediate reply, and it was printed in the next issue of *Century* under the title, "Russian Christianity versus Modern Judaism." An angry, bitter, immensely ironic outburst, it clearly shows that it was written in haste and passion, two virtues that one would not have known she possessed. "Ridicule, not argument, is the only possible reply," she wrote, but with a full command of the facts that by now were beginning to horrify the civilized world, she combined ridicule with detailed and telling argument. More than 100,000 families had already been made homeless, almost two hundred million dollars worth of property destroyed. In Warsaw the crack garrison of 20,000 troops had been ordered to stay in their barracks while shops and homes were plundered. In a hundred and sixty towns the story was repeated of murder, rape, pillage, and the torture of children. All of this, she noted with monumental scorn, was supposed to be for the reasons given by Brafmann, "a Jewish apostate in the pay of the Russian government," although in regard to his rubble of supposed evidence only one thing could be said: "There is but one answer to the charges . . . They are singly and collectively false." Almost in explanation for the change that had taken place in her own tone, from that of the cool and reasonable persuader to the committed pamphleteer, she stated openly: "Of these horrors, no one in whose veins flows a drop of Jewish blood can speak with becoming composure."

This apt and fiery reaction, together with her devoted work in aid of the

streams of refugees, established Miss Lazarus immediately as a leader among the Jewish intellectuals of her day. She bolstered her position very soon with a series of articles, collectively called "Epistles to the Hebrews," in the *American Hebrew*. With the practical aim of finding employment for the refugees during and after the winter of 1882, she outlined a system of technical education which was in large measure put into practice; and she expanded on this theme to urge a return to a broad and varied education for all Jews as well as a renewed study of Hebrew literature and history so that the Jews might again be drawn together in a "harmonious unity." Fittingly, she began a correspondence with Lawrence Oliphant in regard to his efforts to promote the cause of a Jewish homeland in Israel, and within the year she had written for *Century* an important article, "The Jewish Problem," in which she presented one of the earliest statements of the Zionist position. She became a good friend of the passionately pro-Semitic British novelist George Eliot, whose *Daniel Deronda* had been an early proponent for the Zionist cause.

BUT EMMA LAZARUS was first of all a writer; and there is a most instructive lesson to be gained in a study of the way that her writing developed, from her first volume as a young girl to the polished and dedicated work of her mature years. She began her literary career as the purest of Romantics, expressing nothing stronger than that pallid despair which, even in Victorian maidens, is the natural affliction of the bemused adolescent spirit. If she ever looked outside her study, it was only to draw inspiration of a sort from medieval legend, Renaissance sonnets, or the palely imagined glories of ancient Greece. In painful imitation of

the Elizabethan tradition, she wrote a series of many-act tragedies in which with prim virtue she condemned, in bad verse, the very vitality she claimed to worship in the Romantics:

Thus passed unnoted seven barren
years
Of reckless passion and voluptuous
sloth,
Undignified by any lofty thought
In his degraded mind...

Describing herself quite acutely as "late-born and woman-souled... veiled and screened by womanhood," resigned to accepting her state of compulsory innocence, she well expressed her withdrawal in the quotation—from Emerson, of course—with which she prefaced an early poem: "The epochs of our life are not in the visible facts, but in the silent thoughts by the wayside as we walk." The earliest indication that her quietly guarded private world was changing from within might have been seen in her translation, in 1881, of Heine's poems and ballads. It is true that she could never bring herself to translate the strongest of his poems, but one wonders—why this poet, of all the German poets? He was bitter, cynical, complex, mercurial; and she had never seemed anything but simple, studious, and innocent. But as it turned out, she was to quarrel with Heine all her life and finally to write her own epitaph in his tears, rounding out a strange and transfixed relationship between two spirits who never met but knew each other's most intimate sorrow.

Meanwhile, the images in her poetry took on a new and immediate vividness as she began to react to the suffering of the refugees and to see them, not as Ashkenazim and foreigners, but as members of her own race who were driven to her side by the whiplash of history. A scattering of selections shows how the peaceful and wooden lines of

her earlier work now ring with feeling and strength:

Where is our Judas? Where our five-branched palm?

Where are the lion-warriors of the Lord?...

I ope your graves, my people, saith the Lord,

And I shall place you living in your land...

Across the Eastern sky has glowed
The flicker of a blood-red dawn,
Once more the clarion cock has
crowed,

Once more the sword of Christ is
drawn.

A million burning rooftrees light
The world-wide path of Israel's
flight.

It is surely no accident that on this upsurge of passion and strength, when she could describe her fellows in the stunning phrase, "Disgraced, despised, immortal Israel," she should also have been strikingly successful when she turned to make a contribution to the Statue of Liberty. Many other poets then living had offered their best efforts. The great Whittier, for example, had written:

Unlike the shapes on Egypt's sands
Uplifted by the toil-worn slave,
On Freedom's soil with freemen's
hands

We rear the symbol free hands gave.

Her friend Stedman, too, had tried, and interestingly had chanced on much the same imagery. But it was, and is, clear that of all the poems written for the occasion, hers was rightfully chosen. Today we can see how much the free world owes to Emma Lazarus' awakened Jewish ardor.

IT IS EASY to conclude that, contrary to the judgement of critics since her day, she was really a great poet who

died unrecognized. In truth, however, she was never a poet. On occasion—and only under the influence of the one passion of her life, the cause of the Jews and the meaning of their tragedy—she wrote some good lines or coined a striking phrase. But her writing has not the stamp of greatness. It may be intelligent, often skillful, even moving, but no more. These are characteristics belonging to the best of prose writing, and this is just what she was, perhaps the finest prose writer of her time. She might even have made her reputation independently with her fine essays on contemporary events. Some of her major works, such as the long epic “Tannhäuser,” read as though excellent prose had been broken up into pentametric lines; and her superb celebration of the Hebraic tradition which she called “By the Waters of Babylon” is subtitled “Little Poems in Prose” and is actually composed in the form of paragraphs. The literary artist whom she most admired was not a poet but the novelist George Eliot. Since she was primarily an essayist rather than a dramatist, the melodramatic tragedies which she persisted in writing were quite artificial; their conflict was thematic rather than dramatic, the characters mere figures or symbols rather than personalities, and the lines a series of set orations rather than living dialogue. As Emily Dickinson (whose life resembled hers in many ways) was totally a poet, so Emma Lazarus may best be summed up as primarily a writer. This may be why the Victorian maiden of New England did not leave her home but poured out her soul in self-contained jewels of poetry—meanwhile referring to publication as “the auction of the mind”—while her New York counterpart discovered herself, and finally exhausted herself, only when she learned to use her writing as a weapon in a pre-eminently social cause.

Granted this much, then, the picture seems clear. We see the dedicated and gifted Jewess who is aroused to defend the rights of her fellow Jews. In her exaltation as a writer she expressed better than any literary figure of her time the ringing theme of freedom from oppression; and by her talent she became one of the first articulate champions of a Zionist homeland for all Jews. But matters are seldom this clearcut, not in personal lives nor in the affairs of groups. If we look more closely at the inner structure of Emma Lazarus’ life and career, particularly as she revealed it in her published work, we will find pairs of opposites. In their clashing they light up and therefore reveal the complex truth of her roles as person, citizen, writer, and Jewess.

HE WAS A SUM of contradictions. Although her active public life revealed her as committed to defending the homeless and pauperized wandering Jews of Eastern Europe, she was personally an aristocratic member of the oldest Jewish congregation in America, a wealthy socialite, a snob whose most deeply felt speeches in all her plays were the ones she put in the mouths of her villains as they cursed the “cringing, accursed, Oriental Jew.” By temperament an essayist and writer of prose, she wrote almost exclusively verse and poetic tragedies. A Victorian maiden lady to the core, she yet chose to be the translator of Heine. Finally, although shy by disposition and retiring on the basis of her background, she became an active political leader, traveled widely, and spent the last years of her life away from her home and family. But beyond all these dual aspects of her personal life, she expressed through her writings a more basic contradiction, an inner division which is still alive for us today. It has to do with America and its role as haven for the

oppressed and with the consequent discordance which lies at the heart of the Jew's life in America today. Emma Lazarus was perhaps the first Jewish writer in modern times to sense this problem, and it may be that in this rather than in her better known works lies her enduring contribution to Jewish culture.

She very early became fascinated by the image of America as the open port toward which harried exiles might turn, expressing it first in her sonnet for Bartholdi's heroic statue of the goddess of Liberty and at about the same time in a poem with the title "1492":

Thou two-faced year, Mother of
Change and Fate,
Didst weep when Spain cast forth
with flaming sword,
The children of the prophets of the
Lord...
No anchorage the known world could
afford,
Close-locked was every port, barred
every gate.
Then smiling, thou unveil'dst, O
two-faced year,
A virgin world where doors of sun-
set part...

Similarly, in a description of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain on August 3, 1492, she wrote in one of her "Little Poems in Prose": "O bird of the air, whisper to the despairing exiles, that today, today, from the many-masted, gayly bannered port of Palos, sails the world-unveiling Genoese, to unlock the golden gate of sunset and bequeath a continent to Freedom!" As she clearly saw, this was the stroke by which history had at once cast the Jews out from the best civilization they had known in the Diaspora and also sent forth an explorer to discover a land in which the scattered Jews might finally find a new home. It was indeed a two-faced year, one which drove the Jews eastward in their wanderings even

as it marked out the first path for their journey to the West.

HER RECOGNITION, however, was of even more than this. Somehow she achieved an insight into the historic role of the Jews themselves as carriers of this "two-faced" history of recent centuries. For the High Holy Days in the autumn of 1882 she wrote a poem, "The New Year—Rosh Hashanah, 5643," in which she celebrated the Jews as those who, "In a cynic age of crumbling faiths, Lived to bear witness to the living Lord, Or died a thousand deaths." To this she added a summary of their role and fate:

In two divided streams the exiles
part,
One rolling homeward to its ancient
source,
One rushing sunward with fresh will,
new heart.
By each the truth is spread, the law
unfurled,
Each separate soul contains the na-
tion's force,
And both embrace the world.

We may find in this verse a capsule description which brilliantly sums up the place of the Jew in a Gentile world. There are those Jews who, like Emma Lazarus' own family, choose America, and here they are constantly faced with the problem of being both Jew and American. It is the problem of assimilation—or else, as she learned in her own year of discovery, the problem of being brother to those Jews who seem alien and strange. The Jew in America has repeatedly to learn that the higher he rises in a land of opportunities, the greater his risk of being revealed as no more than the lowliest, most alien Jew. Just as the German government boasts of its payment of reparations to the state of Israel, the Jew in America is called upon to live through once more the horror story created by Eichmann

as a loyal servant of the German government. Emma Lazarus, too, was acutely aware of this knife edge of history which makes of each Jewish group a divided stream, for in her own family she saw one sister carry on the tradition which she herself had started while another renounced the struggle and became a Catholic. She would have recognized, though perhaps not sympathetically, the choice made today by those who call themselves Americans first and Jews a poor second, who dissociate themselves from other Jews who are less typically or excellently American, who keep trying to push away the intruding past and finally even turn away in embarrassment at contemporary reminders offered by the trial of Eichmann.

THEN THERE IS the other "stream" of Jewry. If the first represents a journey "sunward," toward the land of the future, the second surely stands for a return "homeward," toward that great source which has sustained a people as a nation down the centuries. Together the two streams do "embrace the world." But also, together they represent both the past, with its constraint and its necessity, and the future, with all its hope and danger. Those Jews who choose to create a state in Israel where nation, race, and culture will fuse, find that as they build a community on their ancient traditions they must compromise with the exigencies of the present. As they build toward the future and exist responsibly in the present, they must begin to temper the meaning and the practices of the traditional past. The art that emerges, as one example, is stamped with both uncritical modernism and self-conscious traditionalism; it is a curious amalgam of the loyal and the faithless. The Israeli is history's new model for the Jew; but the question to be pon-

dered is whether this is more than a one-sided resolution of the Jew's eternal fate, that he is the world's past and its future, both and not simply one.

In 1885, following the death of her father, Miss Lazarus made her second tour of Europe, visiting Italy for the first time. All her joy as a poet and Romantic burst out when she discovered Rome. She wrote back: "I am wild with the excitement of this tremendous place." Then the first signs were seen of the disease which was to kill her, and she spent the winter in England in a dragged-out attempt to recover her strength. Returning to New York after a partial recovery, she again began to waste away. But hers was, at its best, always a feverish art, and she was never so alive and vibrant, so full of thoughts about poetry and travel and Judaism as during her last summer.

She died of cancer on November 19, 1887, at the age of thirty-eight. The year before, already ill and weak from the winter's ravages, she had dragged herself from England to the statue of Venus in the Louvre—but found, as she said, only "the goddess without arms, who could not help." Here was the last exalted chapter of her life, to live again the journey that Heinrich Heine had taken. In her best poem, "Venus of the Louvre," she wrote of their pilgrimage in these tragic closing lines:

...at her feet a pale, death-stricken
Jew,
Her life adorer, sobbed farewell to
love.
Here Heine wept! Here still he weeps
anew,
Nor ever shall his shadow lift or
move,
While mourns one ardent heart, one
poet-brain,
For vanished Hellas and Hebraic
pain.

books and authors

THE PHENOMENAL LEON URIS

By JOEL CARMICHAEL

SNEERING AT BEST-SELLERS is certainly an established habit. The very genesis of a best-seller creates scorn for it practically *ipso facto*. So much trash is so often read by so many that those of us on the sidelines, neither marrying nor being asked in marriage, often feel a mild nausea at hearing of still another tribute to, or from, King Mob.

But as a rule this nausea is not only mild, it is also familiar; it seldom goes beyond conventional grumbling at existing conditions: the success of mediocrity, the low taste of others—in short, the usual stigmata of mass culture.

The case of Leon Uris, however, would seem to be somehow exceptional. Something special must underly the success of his last two best-sellers, *Exodus* and *Mila 18**. There is something deeply offensive, perhaps disturbing about the unprecedented fever both these books kindled in a vast stratum of a public that stretches far beyond the confines of the Jewish community. It is not only the feeling that something vulgar has become popular—at bottom, after all, one term amounts to the other—there is also somehow a special outrageousness in Uris's choice of subjects, and more particularly, perhaps, the way in which he has made them familiar to the great public.

I think Uris's success is peculiar, and its peculiarity is based on a combination of two factors—Uris's bewildering lack of talent and the portentousness of the background in both books. *Exodus* revolves around the concentration-camps, their liquidation and the establishment of the state of Israel. *Mila 18* deals wholly with the uprising of the Jewish ghetto

of Warsaw against the German Army in 1943. The two subjects together constitute perhaps the most remarkable events in the long-drawn-out history of the Jews: the massacre, unparalleled even in Jewish history, of a third of the people, and the restoration of a state after the lapse of two millenia.

At first glance these themes would surely not appear to be likely material for popular literature. They do not tell what is known as a racy yarn; they are not in the glamorous tradition of costume romance. The torture and butchery of the Jews is grim and horrifying, surely the grimmest occurrence of many centuries, if not of all time; the revival of Israel is immensely exhilarating to the historical imagination, but in that sense is rather specialized. One might imagine that their popularity would depend on artistic talent, or—looked at historically, and for a smaller circle—on inspired scholarship.

Yet Uris's books, dealing with them, have been swallowed in millions of copies. Relatively few people at the time showed any particular interest either in the concentration-camps or in the restoration of Israel: their curiosity about both subjects was satisfied by the ordinary newspaper accounts published years ago. In fact, the public at large would seem to have been totally outside the historical enclosure within which these two intertwined events, the murder of the European Jews and the emergence of Israel, unfolded so dramatically. Yet this same broad, anonymous audience has now surged into the bookshops to buy these two books. And what is far more astounding than their purchase, these long and heavy books have actually been read—read and wept over.

* *Mila 18*, by Leon Uris, Doubleday & Co. \$4.95.

THIS HAS ALL taken place against a background of what is generally referred to as a "chorus of critical acclaim." Both books were uniformly "hailed," often in extravagant terms, with the usual panoply of stimulating words—"gripping," "moving," "stirring," etc. Even when a tougher-minded critic expressed some slight reserve about Uris's style he nevertheless ungrudgingly handed him a bouquet for a thoroughly distinguished performance.

Now—can all this be taken seriously? Is it believable at all?

One is at a loss for an answer. *Exodus* and *Mila 18* lack not only the "high art" that might make their harrowing subjects appealing to the masses, but they are, as literature, so absurd, so altogether removed from any category of serious discussion, so repellent as prose, that there is no place even to begin criticizing them. They are wholly sub-literary—not so much bad literature as non- or anti-literature.

I don't mean by this that Uris is merely an untalented, coarse or mediocre writer: he cannot, in a sense, be described as a writer at all. His grotesque abuse of English, extraordinary grammar, unconscious neologisms, and an unflaggingly banal ineptitude of style all give the impression of authentic illiteracy. It is not that he has a good story to tell and tells it, however rudely, with a vigor that arrests attention. He cannot even begin to tell a story, describe a character, or refer to an idea or feeling without everything simply dissolving into a porridge of clichés at best or, more normally, into an inarticulate mumble.

I had thought of picking out an assembly of some characteristic specimens of Uris's writing, but on reflection it seems somewhat unfair, both to Uris and perhaps even more importantly to myself. It would inevitably seem capricious if I selected, out of the vast bulk of these two books, some random snippets I disliked. On the other hand I should lay myself open to a charge of pedantry in disregarding the broad sweep of the narrative for the sake of a few carping remarks, etc. I shall content myself with

the blanket statement I have just made: Uris's prose obviates criticism; one can only turn mournfully away.

So much for the purely literary element in these two books, the element, that is, that makes them novels and not merely compendia of notes of Uris's research. For they are, after all, intended to be novels; they are presented to the reader as literature, not documentation. Moreover, the fact is undeniable that many people really and truly wept. Nor were these merely the simple-minded and illiterate: on the contrary, many people seem to have wept copiously while freely acknowledging how rotten the writing was.

But if we turn from the form of the books to their content we—and Uris—are on firmer ground. It is plain that the background of the books is in a purely factual sense altogether authentic. I don't mean that Uris is particularly accurate or reliable about details, still less about interpretations, nuances, etc.: it is simply that he gives us, or rather refers to, a picture that in its broad outlines is truthful enough for any general reader.

I think this is why both books have been so successful. Their popularity is really an achievement of Uris's painstaking documentation. The reader *knows* that he is, essentially, reading real history; that all these things really happened, that they are *true*. The publisher's blurbs are quite fair: the books do in fact deal with genuinely sensational events of grandiose proportions. They are filled with immensely detailed accounts of factual matters that are clearly authentic, precisely because of the pathetic literary falseness they are enveloped in. Even the most ignorant man-in-the-street can take it for granted, and rightly, that he is being given a glimpse into the raw material of recent history. It is the *knowledge* that the books have an authentic background that provides these books with such a strong framework in the reader's attention that the purely literary form can be disregarded or condoned.

I'm sure that without this external knowledge of the books' factuality they

would be utterly unsaleable. If they had to depend on involving the reader in an imaginative creation the very first paragraph or two would frighten anyone away.

I think this explains the appeal of these preposterous books. It must also explain the extraordinary indulgence of the reviewers, doubtless heightened by an element of leaning over backwards to say the "right thing" about the Jews, or—if that sounds too disabused—by an element of common fairness in reaction to the Nazi holocaust.

STILL, EVEN GRANTING that the history is authentic, it is, after all, so recent that one would imagine it to be either familiar to most people or stale, like yesterday's newspaper. It is only some fifteen years since the news came out of the slaughter of European Jewry, still less since the emergence of Israel. Why should books that simply convey these events in a shapeless, distasteful prose have such a strong pull? One would normally expect a certain time to pass, for the audience to be renewed and the historical circumstances to be gone back to and relived beyond the level of personal experience. But these books of Uris's discuss these historical events as though they were simply lifted out of the current press; everything is put on the level on which it happens, or rather the level on which a particularly imperceptive and hamfisted reporter might relate it.

But it is clearly irrelevant to put the question this way. The fact is that the destruction of European Jewry and the establishment of Israel, while dramatic enough from the point of view of the world at large and of tremendous import to Jews, were assimilated by the great Jewish public in America with relative placidity, and received still less attention from Gentiles. At the time the state of Israel was formed the great majority of the Jewish community was still more or less uninvolved in the Zionist movement, and had not yet worked up that sentimental, non-Zionist, pro-Israel piety that

now characterizes it. Israel was established through the working of complex factors that operated far beyond the reach of the Jewish masses in America. It came about partly through the actions of governments, partly through the abstractions of the United Nations, partly through luck, and primarily, of course, through the steadfast dynamism of the *Yishuv* in Palestine and the will-power of its leadership. After the turbulence of the war the Gentile world was relatively indifferent to what had happened to the Jews under Nazism. Indeed, it may well be that Gentiles by and large were tired of the Jewish element in the war altogether. Insofar as the atrocities were conveyed to the public as authenticated facts they were really so horrible that masses of people could not, perhaps, have been expected to react to them with the sense of mesmerized revulsion that one might have thought normal.

Now half a generation has gone by; the traumatic events have receded. There is a somewhat larger public, perhaps with a livelier interest in recent history. The attachment of Jews to their own identity has been immensely clarified and strengthened, if not by Zionism at least by Israel. There must be any number of people plagued by the nagging sensation of having missed something. Perhaps what seemed to be apathy with respect to the Nazi atrocities and the rebirth of Israel was merely numbness, due to shock; perhaps the shock has been wearing off, and as the realization of the facts dovetails into growing awareness a more vigorous concern is generated.

It may be this desire to catch up with something that has only recently risen to the surface of consciousness that is the "long-felt want" being filled by Uris's two books. The events have receded sufficiently to be squeezed into the small, convenient package Uris is giving his inquisitive though muddled audience. These remarkable events have moved far enough back into history for them to be seen, not through a microscope, which the mock-detail of Uris's novels might bring to mind, but through the far end

of a telescope. Seen from afar they look tiny. They can be ingested. Uris has in fact brought his excursion into history within the reach of the masses by a process of intensive miniaturization.

His artistic incapacity has accomplished two diametrically opposed things. On the one hand he has shrunk both events and characters to such a degree of puniness that they can readily be absorbed by the imagination of the large public he is aiming at, and on the other he has blown them all up into such outsized, unparticularized Standard References that these same masses are left with a masterfully self-assured feeling of control over their own reactions to Uris's version of history. He has made it possible for them to move with moral authority among pawns that both intellectually and emotionally can be controlled with ease. His package is so negotiable it is no longer disturbing.

I suppose this is one way of defining a stereotype. Uris hollows everything out from within; he leaves a shell identifiable only as a signal pointing out the category in which the communication is being effected. Ideas, feelings, people and events are all reduced to slogans; these in their turn have long since ceased to be even good slogans, and have become no more than rhetorical substitutes for what they claim to refer to.

AT BOTTOM, IN FACT, Uris's books are comic-strips, with characters and situations strung together by the sort of dialogue found in comic-strips (not, I hasten to add, good comic-strips, but those of the tenth-rate variety). Superficial and hence false portrayals of events that were true in history are in effect dwarfed by the author's stereotyping to a size accessible to the most ignorant and superficial stratum of the public.

This kind of stereotyping is typical of Uris. It soars triumphantly beyond the to-do the publishers have taken pains to contrive concerning his doubtless genuine but profoundly irrelevant "research."

Thus, in Uris's hands, the concentration-camps, the Warsaw uprising, and

the birth of Israel become comic-strips, or possibly costume romance after all, except for the lack of literary pretensions I have referred to.

We are thus forced to the conclusion that Uris's public—a very fair cross-section of the country!—can only grasp, or imagine that it grasps the real through the bogus. I think there is some kind of a dilemma here. The very medium of expression, the sugar-coating, that one would have thought would make the strongest reader gag has in fact served to make him swallow Uris's dwarfing narratives. If Uris's books are attractive fundamentally as no more than a handy documentation of these great events, what function is served by their novelistic form, when it is just that form that is their most repulsive component?

So the conclusion stands: it is the bogus element in Uris's books that makes the realistic element acceptable. This sounds appalling; it is appalling. It seems to make nonsense of any serious discussion of "public opinion" and its attendant concepts. It reduces all collective ideas, symbols, myths, etc., to such a level of silliness, at least in their popular forms of expression, that one scarcely has the stomach to take them seriously. What is the sense of discussing the meaning of the concentration-camp horrors if the public response of so many people is derived from books like Uris's? From a Jewish point of view especially, the extraordinary feat of setting up the state of Israel, the culminating point in the self-sacrifice of generations of idealists, is utterly trivialized by the pro-Israel sentimentality Uris's *Exodus* has done so much to fortify.

Israelis are reported to have regarded Uris's book as a bonanza pure and simple; it is supposed to have made a substantial contribution to Israel's desperately needed revenues. This cynical attitude of the Israelis to the Diaspora, especially America, may be partially justified by their economic needs, but for those who live in America the prospect is certainly gloomy. Even from an Israeli point of view, indeed, it must be short-

sighted to permit a movement that was, after all, at one time powered by a tremendous upsurge of idealistic effort to be summed up in the minds of a succeeding generation by Uris's unique blend of insipidity and simple-mindedness.

IT IS THIS COMPARISON with other Jewish institutions (the ancient religious tradition and the more recent Zionist Movement) that makes Uris's books particularly depressing. It is not merely that he has written a couple of anti-books: his books are so extraordinarily successful precisely because they deal with themes of unique grandeur and significance in Jewish history, and it is just these themes that one would have hoped would be proof against the sort of catchpenny vulgarity that marks Uris's work. It is not a question of insisting that these events be discussed with piety; it is really a question of proportion. Is *Uris* the only response these events have been able to evoke in the consciousness of the Jewish community? Is *this* how they want to see what has happened during the past generation?

It is colossal *chutzpah* to write about Uris's subjects in Uris's style—a kind of *hillul ha-shem*. It is true that this generation is accustomed to discussing even the most blood-curdling events in a tone of facile matter-of-factness, but Uris's coarseness reminds us that differences of moral—and aesthetic!—criteria are fundamental. What is outraged by Uris is reverence for history and its importance. (This is cast in high relief, for instance, in *Mila 18*, when one of the characters [modeled on the Warsaw diarist Ringelblum] enlarges on how vital and how Jewish is the desire that *the world know what happened*. A clown too can quote the Scriptures.)

For all one knows, of course, Uris may be altogether sincere; so much the worse. Yet for anyone involved in the events he describes, or even for anyone with a genuine interest in them, the popularity of Uris's books is a slap in the face.

Thus a great many people have been slapped in the face, which brings us

back to the same problem—they like it.

But there is no point expressing a mandarin-like disgust with Uris—he is himself the public that buys him. He is, in short, a social phenomenon, perhaps even a syndrome. Thus the question of blame becomes a question of where to locate this social syndrome.

Is it America? The notorious split between instincts and information? Or are we overestimating the unique value of literature, indicated in another situation by our bafflement at the authentic, deeply felt emotional reaction of shop girls to the tawdry banalities of magazines like *True Confessions*? Can emotions be triggered by stereotyped symbols? Can fixed signals be moving symbols? Can the facts of life be replaced by verbal references? Are we all Pavlov's dogs?

Weighty questions, perhaps—all subject to depressing answers.

Or should we abandon the perspective of depth psychology and return to the freer, if more slippery terrain of popular sociology? Here we shall probably be forced to situate the Uris phenomenon within the general vulgarization of Jewish life that for the past decade has been most forcefully attested to by the withering away of Zionist idealism and its replacement by the conformist pro-Israel piety of bond drives, souvenir hunting, tourism to Israel, chauvinist *schmaltz* and all the other manifestations of communal allegiance devoid of spiritual content that have become commonplaces to grumble at.

Looked at from this point of view, the phenomenon of Uris's popularity finds its niche within the larger phenomenon of the dilution of ideals, judgement and taste that has become a hallmark of mass culture in Twentieth Century America. Perhaps the sense of Jewish identity has not been strengthened at all, but progressively enfeebled, at least in terms of its authentic, singular content, and Uris batters on just this enfeeblement, or diffusion. Sentimentality and sensationalism have replaced organic identification, and Jews are left clinging to attitudes and slogans in place of traditions, ideas, and beliefs.

THE FUTURE OF SOVIET JEWS

By REUBEN AINSZTEIN

STAR IN ECLIPSE: RUSSIAN JEWRY RE-VISITED, by JOSEPH B. SCHECHTMAN. Thomas Yoseloff, New York-London 1961. 255 pp. \$3.95.

THE JEWISH PROBLEM IN THE SOVIET UNION, by B. Z. GOLDBERG. Crown Publishers, Inc. New York 1961. 374 pp. \$4.95.

WE ALL HAVE to take in, as it were, each other's laundry when writing about Soviet Jewry, because of the paucity of information on the subject, and Joseph B. Schechtman's and B. Z. Goldberg's books are no exception to the general rule, even though their authors have recently visited the Soviet Union. Personal observations and eye-witness reports form only part of their books and although they are of great interest and value, their chief merit lies in the fact that they corroborate and confirm what is already known rather than reveal much that is new about the situation of Soviet Jewry.

Schechtman's book is short, well-organized and lucid. To me its main merit lies in the chapters describing the author's visit to Babi Yar and his return to his native Odessa, the legal position and organization of the principal religious faiths in the Soviet Union, and the inability of a Soviet Jew to change his nationality by declaration. The author's background and knowledge of Russian history make of these parts of his book a valuable reference work. On the other hand, some of his conversations with Soviet Jews are not very convincing—especially those dealing with the future of Yiddish. I don't doubt that he met Russian Jews who expressed the opinions he quotes, but I cannot imagine that they expressed themselves quite so smoothly, rolling off statistics, quotations from Leivik's poems and the latest information on the position of Yiddish in the United States. Schechtman's interlocutors give the impression of being

types rather than characters.

B. Z. Goldberg's qualifications for writing about Soviet Jewry are quite exceptional. A son-in-law of Sholem Aleichem, he visited the Soviet Union in the 1930's, ranging as far as Birobidjan, and again in 1946, when he travelled in the Ukraine and Byelorussia in Itzik Fefer's company. His latest visit to the Soviet Union, in 1959, was exceptionally fruitful in personal encounters and exchanges of opinions, which he writes of well and convincingly, but the treatment of the larger historical and political issues of Soviet Jewry's past and present is disappointing. This is due in part to the poor organization of the book and partly to the author's naïve approach to the stern realities of Russian and Soviet history.

POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL realism is, unfortunately, not always apparent in either book. Thus Schechtman regards the present day anti-Semitism in Soviet Russia as predominantly the work of the rulers and not of the people whom they rule. Goldberg is more realistic on this score: he realizes that the present Soviet leadership is directing the widespread plebeian anti-Semitism into channels that it believes it can control for its own purposes, but he does not show the same realism when dealing with several other aspects of Jewish existence in the Soviet Union. I shall quote one example of his lack of realism.

In their anti-German propaganda directed at their own people during the war, Soviet leaders did not use their mass communication media to present the Jews as the chief victims of Nazi racialism and all too often avoided mentioning them as victims by speaking of "other Soviet peoples." The result of such propaganda, to quote Goldberg, was "... to make one think that the Nazis were only a little bit harder on Jews, that the Jews were merely another people exposed to the Nazi scourge... If the racial issue had been met honestly and courageously, the dismay at the Nazi atrocities against the Jews would have added zest to the

war effort. The moral issue would have given another dimension to the struggle, arousing the religious fervor which is embedded in the Russian character."

The argument that Russians, Ukrainians or Byelorussians would have hated the Germans more and fought them with a "religious fervor," if they had been told, to quote Goldberg again, that "the mere fact that one was a Jew by race marked him for death if he fell into Nazi hands..." while "Being a Ukrainian under Nazi rule did not necessarily seal one's fate," strikes me as extremely naïve. Even in the West, soldiers were not indoctrinated in hatred of Nazi Germany by being lectured on the Nazi crimes against European Jewry, for reasons basically not too different from those that inspired Soviet propagandists. Nor was the civilian population of the United States and Britain prodded on to greater efforts by being told that the principal victims of the Germans were the Jews. Even after American soldiers had themselves seen the work of the Nazis in the concentration camps they had liberated, a poll conducted among American troops in Germany early in 1946 revealed that 22 percent of those polled thought the Germans were justified in persecuting the Jews, while another 51 percent thought that Hitler had done Germany "a lot of good between 1933 and 1939."*

In this connection I wish to cite a personal experience. In the winter of 1943-4 I was training in the R.A.F. on the Isle of Man. Having reached England only six months earlier, I gave a lecture on my experiences in occupied Belgium, France, and Franco's Spain, with special emphasis on those of my experiences which might prove useful to airmen shot down over occupied Europe. About 100 men and quite a number of W.A.A.F.'s attended the lecture. Encouraged by my success, I suggested to the Educational Officer that I should give a talk on what had happened in the Warsaw Ghetto. He agreed but advised me to change the name of my lec-

ture from "The Revolt and Destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto" to "German Terror in Poland." I refused, and I had an audience of three men, one of them a Canadian Jew...

ALTHOUGH DISSIMILAR in many other respects, both authors seem unable or unwilling to view the present situation of Soviet Jewry against the background of Russian history, and not merely against the backdrop of the last 43 years. The results of such a limited approach are particularly obvious in those parts of the books which deal with the present and future of Soviet Jewry, and nowhere more so than in the authors' attempts to come to grips with the present anomalous status of the Jews as a nationality and socio-economic group within Soviet society.

I believe, for instance, that it is quite mistaken to treat the Jewish problem as though it were the same in Russia, the Ukraine and the Baltic states. The Jewish problem in the Ukraine is not the same as in Russia proper and neither can be understood without an analysis of Moscow's continuing preoccupation with the problem of maintaining the Russo-Ukrainian union, which forms the geopolitical basis of the Russian empire. It is, furthermore, quite impossible to understand Khrushchev's views on the Jewish problem and his policies in this regard without taking into account the fact that he is a Russian who has made his career within the Soviet hierarchy as a successful ruler of the Ukraine. The present contradictions in the Kremlin's Jewish policies become much more comprehensible when one realizes that the men who opposed Stalin's openly anti-Semitic policies (Molotov, Voroshilov and Kaganovich) are in the wilderness, while Khrushchev, who on his own admission was behind the Crimean affair, is in power. The incorporation of the Crimea into the Ukraine in February 1953, hardly a month after Stalin's death, was one of the greatest concessions ever made by Moscow to Ukrainian nationalism. It was the last act in a drama which began with the Kremlin's abandonment

* *Inside U.S.A.*, by John Gunther.

of plans to colonize the peninsula with Jews and was followed by the murder of Lozovsky and the leading members of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, after they had been accused of scheming to detach the Crimea from the Soviet Union and using it as "a base of American aggression against the Soviet Union." On Khrushchev's own admission, he always opposed the plan to settle the Crimea with Jews—his role in persuading his Russian colleagues on the Central Committee of the necessity to placate Ukrainian nationalists by giving them the Crimea can be easily imagined. Unfortunately, neither Schechtman nor Goldberg brings out these aspects of Khrushchev's career and personality when dealing with his attitudes toward Soviet Jewry.

Both authors also fail even to hint that the present exacerbation of the Jewish national problem must be examined against a background of growing national conflicts in many parts of the Soviet Union—conflicts due to a new phase in Russian national assertiveness, often verging on chauvinism, and to a new wave of Slav expansionism in the form of agricultural colonization. I have in mind, of course, the growing pervasiveness of the Russian language and culture in the Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Baltic states and the colonization of the so-called Virgin Lands in Central Asia.

Thus Kazakhstan, officially the republic of a Turkish-speaking Moslem people, today has a population of nearly eleven million, of whom only 3,500,000 are Kazakhs. Although elementary education is still provided for Kazakh children in their native language, secondary and university education is being gradually Russified either by administrative decrees or under the pressure of the rapid economic and cultural changes in the republic. The resistance of the Kazakh mass and intelligentsia to the loss of their country and national identity is strong enough to be registered in novels and stories dealing with the settlement of the Virgin Lands and in occasional articles in the Communist Party press which fulminate against "Kazakh feudal-

bourgeois nationalism." The Kazakh Republic still survives in name and has not become part of the Russian Federation for a reason that is not difficult to find: such an official admission of successful colonization on the part of Moscow would be hard to explain to the peoples of Africa and Asia. Seen against such a background, it becomes easier to understand why Russian Soviet leaders such as Khrushchev, Suslov or Furtseva show so little understanding and patience for Jewish national claims, especially since the Draft Program of the Soviet Communist Party, published in July 1961, states that within the next two decades there will be a growing Russification of the less numerous and culturally more backward peoples of the Soviet Union: "The establishment of new industrial centers, the discovery and exploitation of natural resources, the settlement of virgin lands and the development of all forms of communication, increase the mobility of the population and lead to ever growing personal contacts among the peoples of the Soviet Union . . . The frontiers between the Union Republics within the confines of the USSR are increasingly losing their former importance... With the victory of Communism in the USSR an even greater rapprochement among the different nationalities will take place . . . The process of voluntary learning of Russian, along with one's own language, is of positive value, because it brings the cultural achievements of all the peoples of the Soviet Union, and of world culture in general, within the reach of every Soviet people and nationality. The Russian language has practically become the common language of international intercourse and cooperation of all the Soviet peoples."

IN CZARIST RUSSIA the Jews were legally aliens. The Czarist Code of Laws placed them at the bottom of the list of alien (*inorodtsy*) tribes inhabiting the Russian Empire: "Among the aliens inhabiting the Russian Empire are the following: 1. The Siberian aliens; 2. The Samoyeds of the Archangel Government; 3. The nomadic aliens of the Stavropol

Government; 4. The Kalmuks leading a nomadic life in the Astrakhan and Stavropol Governments; 5. The Kirghiz of the Inner Horde; 6. The aliens of the Akmolinsk, Semipalatinsk, Semirechensk, Ural and Turgai Territories; 7. The alien populations of the Trans-Caspian Territory; 8. The Jews."

The Soviet regime has put an end to the alien status of Samoyeds, Kirghiz, Kazakhs, Tatars and others, but it has not entirely eliminated from the consciousness of Russians, Ukrainians and other Soviet nationalities the feeling that the Jews are somehow aliens who have to prove that they are useful to their hosts. This special position of Jews in Russian society was perhaps never better defined than by the Pahlen Commission—a committee of conservative Czarist officials under the chairmanship of Count Pahlen set up by an imperial *ukaz* of Alexander III—when it presented to the Czar its conclusions on the Jewish question in Russia in 1888. "Having established the true dimensions and characteristics of the 'Jewish evil,'" the Pahlen Commission said, "we are naturally expected to answer a question of an opposite nature: Are the Jews to any extent useful to the state and society? This question, though frequently heard, is not quite intelligible, for every subject who fulfills his obligations is useful to the state and society. It would be strange to put a similar question concerning other nationalities of eastern origin in Russia, such as Greeks, Armenians and Tatars. And yet this question is raised with great frequency in the case of the Jews, for the purpose of proving the need for repressive measures and framing a stronger indictment against the Jewish population."

Soviet Jews still have to go on proving, in a way no other Soviet nationality is called upon to prove, that they are not aliens and that they are useful to their hosts. Unlike the Czars and their ruling class, the present rulers of Russia still find the Jews highly useful to their state and society, so useful, in fact, that like the Pharaohs of old they will not let

them go. They no longer find them useful as diplomats, high-ranking officers, managers and engineers in established and well-run industrial enterprises, and are therefore quite prepared to use the widespread popular anti-Semitism to make the life of Jews sufficiently difficult in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev or Odessa to compell them to look for work in Kazakhstan, Turkmenia or Uzbekistan, where they will be more "useful to the state and society."

An anecdote now popular in Moscow makes this point quite clear. It tells of Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich meeting in the Kremlin after they have successfully overthrown Khrushchev to decide what to do with him. Molotov suggests that Khrushchev should be sent as ambassador to Ulan Bator, but Malenkov and Kaganovich object because he is certain to start plotting with Mao-Tse-tung against them. Then Malenkov proposes that Khrushchev should be made manager of a power plant in a distant part of the country, but Molotov and Kaganovich are against his proposal, because they are afraid that Khrushchev is certain to make a success of his job and use his influence to stage a political comeback. Finally Kaganovich suggests that Khrushchev be given Jewish identity papers and allowed to look for work in Moscow...

GOLDBERG CONCLUDES that "Forty-odd years after the October Revolution, the economic status of Russian Jews is still 'peculiar'. They are still concentrated in a limited range of pursuits of the intelligentsia, and this is still resented by the other elements of the population, with a resultant policy of discrimination, no matter what it is called or how interpreted." But he goes on say: "Actually, it is a social and psychological problem rather than an economic one. For if the Jews were fully recognized as a nationality and afforded the opportunity for a socio-cultural life of their own, there would be no problem." Frankly, I cannot see how the full recognition of the Jews as a nationality, the reappearance

ance of Yiddish newspapers and books and the reopening of Yiddish theaters could change the feeling of the Russian masses toward the Jews in their midst. And I do not agree with Goldberg that "The restoration of the full equality of the Jew would reinstate also his individuality." On the contrary, I believe that tens of thousands of young Soviet Jews have only now regained their individuality—now that they know that they are Jews and are beginning to rediscover what it means to be a Jew—and that the survival of Soviet Jewry will be assured by them, even though they speak and think in Russian and not in Yiddish. The restoration of their right to become Soviet diplomats or generals will no longer satisfy them.

The dominant personality in Soviet Jewry is likely to be the Soviet Jew described by Goldberg as Case Four: "A young man, a student. He was anxious to hear about Jews everywhere and especially about Israel. He was not so much concerned about anti-Semitism in the United States and other countries as most others were. He wanted to know if there were any books on Jews and Judaism in English—he was studying the English language. He wondered how he could get such a book. He had recently read, in Russian, a book on Uriel Acosta, a fascinating man. Was there really such a man? As we talked more freely, he confided to me that he was determined to go to Israel. How could he, possibly? Well, much more was possible in his country than people abroad realized. Was he against Communism? No. Was he against the Soviet regime? No, but he was being crowded out—psycho-

logically, that is. They said he was a Jew. Maybe they were right. He was a Jew. But what was a Jew? He was trying to find out. Yes, he wanted to be a Jew, a real, full Jew. For this you had to go to Israel."

EXALTED LAMENT

By HARVEY SHAPIRO

KADDISH and OTHER POEMS 1958-1960, by ALLEN GINSBERG. San Francisco: City Lights Books. 100 pp. \$1.50.

"EXALTED AND HALLOWED be God's great name in this world of His Creation," which is Allen Ginsberg's intent. The world of Creation, the part of it that is the world of Ginsberg's "Kaddish," is the world of insanity, the miserable streets we walk every day of our lives, dead Jews, some of our time. He has given us some of our time and a good piece of his own life fashioned into a long death anthem for his mother, Naomi. Few poets, I think, would want to summon that death, though the joy of release is in every line.

"Kaddish" (the title poem) is a breakthrough for Ginsberg, and part of the joy in reading it comes from the recognition that a contemporary has faced up to an incredible task successfully. I don't mean only that Ginsberg has been able to cut through and summon the dead, to recreate his insane mother, to make his peace with her, more than that to make a muse of her—the most bizarre muse in English Lit. It would be achievement enough. But he has been able to capture a story and a period of American-Jewish life, a fat novel-full, in verse that never slides under the material it has to carry while it keeps the long breath that is his signature and the pure impulse that is his gift.

Why speak of joy in commenting on a harrowing poem? Because there is joy and faith in the composition itself, in the actual process of composition, that

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comes across to the reader through the long, open lines, flung out in space and then quickly caught up, and through the poet's ability to make his imagination soar over the details of the remembered life when the poet and the poem need that relief:

Communist beauty, sit here married
in the summer among daisies, promised
happiness at hand—

holy mother, now you smile on your
love, your world is born anew, children
run naked in the field spotted with
dandelions,

They eat in the plum tree grove at
the end of the meadow and find a
cabin where a white-haired negro
teaches the mystery of his rainbarrel—

That joy, which comes from having worked through problems (personal and technical) so that the imagination is buoyed up and free to play, sets Ginsberg apart from the great majority of his contemporaries.

"**K**ADDISH" BEGINS as a meditation—a familiar mood, an emotion recollected in (almost) tranquility. Three years after his mother's death in an asylum, the poet walks the streets of Greenwich Village into the lower East Side: Orchard Street "where you walked 50 years ago, little girl—from Russia, eating the first poisonous tomatoes of America." (Still another work of our time that takes off from a walk through the city streets.) But the drive of the poem is quickly established in this first section, getting its initial emotive power, I think, from the direct address to the dead. Much of the story of Naomi Ginsberg's life and her son's reaction to it is collapsed here and the key images introduced.

The section concludes with a lyric based on echoes of the sound of the Hebrew prayer ("Magnificent, mourned no more, marred of heart...") in which the exaltation of God's name and the exaltation of the woman's insane life and death are fused—the essential strategy of the poem.

Early in this first section the rhythm is set going in long end-stopped lines that are in fact verse paragraphs.

the rhythm the rhythm—and your
memory in my head three years after
—And read Adonais' last triumphant
stanzas aloud—wept, realizing how we
suffer—

And how Death is that remedy all
singers dream of, sing, remember,
prophesy as in the Hebrew Anthem,
or the Buddhist Book of Answers—and
my own imagination of a withered
leaf—at dawn—

(From Ginsberg's own remarks about his habits of composition in the end papers of *The New American Poetry* it would seem that finding the basic beat is his way of getting into a work.) Ginsberg accelerates the rhythm when he has to by breaking the length of the individual units within the verse paragraphs—as in the narrative that follows section I—and finally by fracturing the paragraphs themselves.

Section II, the telling of Naomi Ginsberg's story ("remembrance of electrical shocks") is the heart of the poem. It obviously posed the most difficulties and received the most work. Ginsberg handles the narration in an ungrammatical shorthand that appears to be swift notation of basic fact but does in reality give you much side detail, characterization, description, affect, literary play ("On what wards—I walked there later, oft—old catatonic ladies"), mimicry ("Roosevelt should know her case, she told me"). His ability to recall and recreate this story of breakdowns, hallucinations, and great scandalous scenes is astounding.

The last scene in the narration is an account of the poet's final interview with his mother two years before her death:

One hand stiff—heaviness of forties
& menopause reduced by one heart
stroke, lame now—wrinkles—a scar on
her head, the lobotomy—ruin, the
hand dipping downwards to death—

The section concludes with a "HYMMNN" summing up the horror

("Blessed be He in homosexuality! Blessed be He in Paranoia!").

Sections III and IV, short passages, are echoes of the great explosion of the narrative rather than attempts to restate it or make abstract sense of it. Their key phrases—"Only to have not forgotten" and "What have I left out"—mingle in the final section with the sound of the crows over Naomi Ginsberg's grave and the repeated naming of God.

It occurs to me that I have been treating Ginsberg's "Kaddish" as if it were a literary work—indeed, a literary work of some distinction. This approach may obscure the brutal, obscene story and the poem's desperate and at times consciously illiterate cry. The narrative itself is a splattering of phrases as if the poet were afraid that reflection or literary considerations might get in the way of what took a good deal of honesty to face, and give him an excuse to back off.

MY VIEW of Ginsberg's achievement is that he has said what he wanted to say with all the force of his original impulse, and with nothing left out. And that, as much as he had to fight literature to do this, he was able to do it through the use of the literary techniques of our day. Maybe that is true to some extent of most of our successful work. I don't know what is gained by calling "Kaddish" "anti-literature." It has shape, coherence, force; it is a complex mixture of realistic narrative (real people, places, things, happenings) and visionary arias, managed with skill. Moreover, it was written by a man very sure of his literary tradition and quick to name literary fathers.

Naturally, none of the other poems in the volume stand up to "Kaddish." They are mostly weak, wandering pieces with no place to go—some of them evidences of Ginsberg's growing preoccupation with his public self. (I would except "At Apollinaire's Grave," "The Lion For Real," and the little piece of realism "To Aunt Rose.") Occasionally in these poems Ginsberg sweetens his observations. Then even his rhetoric seems false

and borrowed: "no woman in house/ loves husband in flower unity." Or the sentimentality that often threatens to show in a Ginsberg poem—but never in "Kaddish"—flashes belly upwards. So in "At Apollinaire's Grave," after stating his wish to lay a copy of "Howl" on that dead poet, Ginsberg writes: "I hope some wild kidmonk lay his pamphlet on my grave for God to read me on cold winter nights in heaven."

Maybe that isn't any more sentimental than "So may some gentle muse / With lucky words favor my destined urn / And as he passes turn / And bid fair piece be to my sable shroud." But the earlier version has the saving grace of "lucky." Anyway, the conception of the poet as "wild kidmonk" is the deadend, the winking anus of Beat Romanticism.

There's no point in belaboring these faults. The achievement of "Kaddish" is enough to ponder. Its power is such that when Ginsberg says in one of his political poems, "History will make this poem prophetic and its awful silliness a hideous spiritual music," I almost believe him.

GINSBERG HAS BECOME such a public issue that it's difficult now to read him naturally; you ask yourself after every line, am I for him or against him. And by and large that's the kind of criticism he has gotten—votes on a public issue. (I see this has been one of those reviews.)

At a party some months ago—a gathering of poets, most of an unalloyed bohemianism, despite the sufferance granted me—I mentioned his work and found no one there who respected it or would even acknowledge it existed. Such a response to Ginsberg is an act of will, of willful blindness, I think, because his talent is self-evident—of a quick brilliance and all of it up on the wide, wide screen. (Corso's talent strikes me as similarly undeniable. As for Ferlinghetti, I read him as an agile, soft shoe man.) How can you come away from the opening pages of "Howl" without seeing that a young poet has had a vision of the

City, has bared his brains to heaven and caught the fire straight, as no one has since Blake?

Why the blindness? Resentment of the fact that Ginsberg has captured the only audience most poets want—the young, the college kids, the Village girls and boys? Resentment of the public relations pimps among the Beats? Resentment of the claims a boy from Newark makes for himself in his verse? ("And 'tis most wicked in a Christian Nation / For any man to pretend to Inspiration." Of course, if he's a Welsh import flown in on the blessings of a Sitwell, that's different.)

Maybe the major reason for the resistance to Ginsberg is that he opens questions many poets and critics have an interest in considering closed. When I first went to school to the quarterlies there was little doubt about the way American poetry was to go. Blackmur summed it up in an essay in *Kenyon Review* in 1952 ("Lord Tennyson's Scissors: 1912-1950"). The Apocalyptic and Violent school (Lindsay, Jeffers) and the other school of anti-intelligence (writers in *transition* who copied French poets like Apollinaire) were finished. The dominant school was to be the "school of Donne" (described at one point as writers of "A Court poetry, learned at its fingertips and full of a decorous willfulness called ambiguity"). Now, largely because of Ginsberg's work, we are not so sure. It will all have to be fought out again. An upsetting prospect.

DISAPPOINTING DIMENSIONS

By ROLAND B. GITTELSON

RELIGION IN AMERICAN LIFE, James Ward Smith and A. Leland Jamison (ed). Princeton University Press, 1961. Vol. I—THE SHAPING OF AMERICAN RELIGION; Vol. II—RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES IN AMERICAN CULTURE.

WHATEVER DIFFERENCES there may be among those who undertake to evaluate *Religion in American Life*, latest of the Princeton Studies in American Civilization, there will be unanimous accord that this is the most ambitious attempt of its kind in our generation. Nineteen eminent university scholars have pooled their intellectual resources to survey "the religious dimensions of American culture and the cultural dimensions of American religion"—for the whole of American history, not merely the present. That they have not altogether succeeded will be less surprising than that they undertook so monumental an effort in the first place or that their accomplishments are so considerable.

The volumes under review are the first two of four. All are an outgrowth of the Special Program in American Civilization at Princeton University, which each year offers an advance seminar on an important aspect of American life. During three academic years since 1948 the subject of the seminar was "Religion In American Life." The creative scholar-

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ship which resulted in and from these seminars is now before us in permanent form.

Volume I—*The Shaping of American Religion*—opens with essays devoted respectively to Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism and "religions on the Christian perimeter." There follows, then, a number of papers dealing with more generalized phases of American religious thought. Volume II—*Religious Perspectives in American Culture*—also contains two types of essays. The first group approaches the relationship of American religion to education, law and political life. The second traces the influence and expression of religion in literature, music and architecture. Volume III is projected as a study-in-depth of religion and economic life, while the fourth and concluding volume encompasses a comprehensive bibliography covering the whole.

Any attempt to comment on individual essays must be selective and will of necessity reflect the preferences and predilections of the reviewer. In his presentation of Protestantism, H. Richard Niebuhr suggests that the plethora of churches and sects within the movement—especially accentuated by the freedom and individualism of America—manifests the fact that Protestantism has developed not as one but rather as a whole series of protests against existing religious practices and beliefs, some of them aimed at Catholicism and some at earlier protests within Protestantism itself. He traces at some length the tension between authority or order on the one hand and freedom or anarchy on the other. His conclusion that "Protestantism, left free by democracy to develop in its own way, has shown as strong a bent toward unification as toward atomization" will be less than completely convincing to many of his readers—even, I suspect, to some within Protestantism itself. He recognizes with admirable honesty the dichotomy between the thrust of the Protestant churches toward social melioration and their emphasis on the individual, sometimes at the expense of society.

I would wish that—elsewhere in these volumes even if not in this initial essay

—more attention might have been given to the Unitarian-Universalist movement, surely as uniquely American a religious development as any discussed here, and perhaps more likely than most to influence the future development of American religion. There is also a failure to record the decreasing significance of denominationalism in American Protestant life, the increased tendency of so many congregants to base their church affiliation more on such factors as geographic proximity and the personal characteristics of the preacher than along inherited denominational lines. Despite these and similar deficiencies, however, Dr. Niebuhr does as effective a job as anyone could in compressing the story of American Protestantism into half-a-hundred pages.

SOME OF THE LACUNAE necessarily present in his essay are filled by later writers. Almost too much so. The entire project devotes far too little attention to Catholic thought and even less to Judaism. The editors are aware of this bent in their approach and explain it, of course, on the grounds of America's early history as a predominantly Protestant nation. Yet, if their studies are adequately to treat the present, to say nothing of anticipating the future, this kind of imbalance must be recognized as a serious defect. No explanation out of past history, for example, can justify the fact that Sidney E. Ahlstrom's treatment of "Theology in America" blandly ignores both Catholic and Jewish theologians.

Henry J. Browne's essay on Catholicism is too largely a history of anti-Catholic thought in this nation's past and too blatantly an attempt at Catholic apologetics. In suggesting that Catholic influence on non-Catholic America may be measured by such phenomena as the wearing of the Star of David by Jews or the use of the liturgical crib by Protestants, it borders on the puerile and absurd. There is too great a tendency to equate liberal American political and economic doctrine with Catholic thought and to ignore the heavy incidence of McCarthyism and Birchism

among Catholics. To attribute these excrescences of American politics exclusively to Catholicism or Catholics would be grossly unfair. But to act as if there were no connection at all—as Browne does here—is no less inexcusable.

In like manner there is no real confrontation here of the parochial school problem, of the Church-State issue involved in the use of public monies for sectarian religious education. There is but scanty and inadequate reference to the birth control controversy or to the fascinating transformations which America may be in process of inducing within Catholicism itself. It would be foolish to suppose that even so venerable and monolithic an institution as the Catholic Church could remain permanently impervious to modification under the impact of the uniqueness which is America. Evidence is on hand that such change may already have commenced; some consideration of that evidence would have come close to the very heart of the Princeton inquiry. While Browne's essay includes much which is both interesting and important on the history of the Catholic Church in the United States, it unfortunately skirts or ignores some of the most basic issues on which we most sorely need to be informed.

OSCAR HANDLIN'S PAGES ON JUDAISM are superficial in the extreme. He approaches it very much as a grudging non-Jew might—with an "objectivity" that borders on indifference. His understanding of Judaism appears to be anything but knowledgeable or informed. How otherwise can we hope to understand his saying: "To be a Jew called for no explicit beliefs; one could participate meaningfully in traditional customs and ceremonies without inquiry into their theological meanings." For an ignorant Jewish layman to live as if this statement were true is one thing. For an historian of Jewish origin himself to pronounce such a view as truth is another and quite less excusable error.

There is an incredible inability here to understand either Reform Judaism or

Zionism. The former—which in one place is egregiously labeled *Reformed Judaism*—he attributes entirely to American influence, as if there had never been any European roots. The latter he understands variously as a consequence of Christian millennialist thinking, of "sentimental attachment to Judaism," or of "the absence of authentic authority in American Judaism"—with no indication at all that Zionism has always been deeply and essentially anchored near the very essence of Judaism itself. Not a single word is given to the exciting compatibility between Zionist accomplishment in Israel and the American democratic thrust . . . or to the infusion of new energy which the American Jewish community has already received from Israel . . . or, for that matter, to a host of new problems injected by Israel into American Jewish life.

Though admittedly a minor matter in itself, perhaps an index to Handlin's superficiality is that an historian so scholarly and sober in all other fields of investigation should list as sources on Judaism such shallow material as two volumes by Lewis Browne and Herman Wouk's *Marjorie Morningstar*. How sad that if Judaism were to have forty pages in this voluminous study, it could not have been more accurately and sympathetically represented!

The sadness is compounded by two additional factors. One is the indifference to Judaism of the other authorities. Reference has already been made to the total absence of Jewish theologians. Neither Kaufman Kohler nor Solomon Schechter nor Mordecai Kaplan is even mentioned. When the views of other denominations on capital punishment are catalogued, those of Judaism are ignored. When the efforts of other faiths to influence social legislation in Washington are described, Judaism is bypassed. In eighty-two pages of photographs and text on "Religious Expression in American Architecture," the Touro Synagogue and Brandeis University Chapels are the only Jewish buildings included. In numerous references to the

ways in which the American environment has influenced or changed religions originating in Europe, nothing (except for Handlin's most inadequate comments) is said about either Conservative or Reform Judaism.

The second complicating factor as far as Judaism is concerned, is that the two Jews who comment in Volume II on the Church-State issue as it affects public education espouse anything but a responsible or authentic Jewish point of view. Will Herberg, for example, writes of the "high and impregnable wall of separation between Church and State" which Justice Black *imagined* to be enacted by the First Amendment" (italics added). One is tempted, moreover, to suspect him either of carelessness or intellectual dishonesty when, to push his argument, he mentions ADL sponsorship of a brochure on *December Festivals* without adding that the attitude of the ADL itself on this matter has changed appreciably since the brochure was issued. Or when he quotes at length the *New York Times* of 27 June 1958 on a contemplated re-appraisal by the Central Conference of American Rabbis of its traditional attitude toward Church and State, without observing that two years later the "ground swell of rabbinic opinion" apparently favoring a change had vanished into virtual nothingness and the opposition of the Conference to any breaching of the Church-State wall was resoundingly confirmed.

In his study of *Religion and Law in America*, Wilber G. Katz comes not much closer than Herberg to voicing the preponderant view of American Jewry. After all the years of tribulation and travail which finally culminated in the

creation of such democratic agencies as the National Community Relations Advisory Council and the Synagogue Council of America to determine and express the sentiment of the American Jewish community, we still stand exposed to the individual Jewish "expert" who, on delicate and sensitive matters, voices a view at total variance to that which is authentically Jewish!

TO THIS REVIEWER the best and most valuable portion of these two volumes is the essay on "Religion and Science in American Philosophy." Here James Ward Smith convincingly distinguishes between a superficial accommodation of religion to science—one in which only the fruits of science are accepted—and the far more fundamental accommodation we need—one in which the very spirit of scientific inquiry will be embraced by religion. If this reviewer were called upon to select the single, most important sentence in 903 pages, it would be this: "Few lessons of intellectual history are more striking than this: a point of view which ignores or fails to keep abreast of science will not in the long-run win out."

Yet it is not the abdication of religion to science for which Smith pleads. He deplores the extent to which this has already taken place, particularly in the shamelessly one-sided courtship between religion and psychology. He warns us: "Psychology is not a substitute for theology." In short, religion—while accepting both the content and methodology of science—must also retain "the cosmic religious sense." It cannot afford to surrender "the cosmic content of religious belief."

There are points at which one or another of these essays comes encouragingly close to the real confrontation of religion with America, which means to say, to the manner in which that which is unique about America must necessarily change much that has been traditional in religion. Such a point is achieved by Daniel D. Williams when he exposes the essential incompatibility of democratic

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hope and those religious doctrines which stress man's depravity. It is difficult—if not impossible—to reconcile democracy with teachings about Original Sin. "... a view of man and of divine grace which denies any real capacity for effective human decision and action in history will undercut the democratic process."

The unique role of religious agencies in American political life (as yet more potential than real) is traced effectively both by William Lee Miller and R. Morton Darrow. Religious leaders are warned against the twin dangers of oversimplification and naiveté, against a "politics of sermon endings." And they are reminded that they cannot expect to plunge into the arena of public life, then claim immunity from criticism and attack on the grounds of being religious.

MUCH IS MISSING in the material at hand. One must hope that at least some of it will be supplied in the volume yet to appear. There should be a more elaborate treatment in depth of the mutual influence of American religious groups on each other, of the ways in which they are responding to acculturation. The editors' explanations of why the substantive issue of the relationship of American religion to the current struggle for civil rights receives only passing and casual mention are far from convincing. The same may be said of the responsibility of religion on the issue of nuclear war.

It would be unfair to allow such criticisms as these to stand, however, without praising the temerity of the editors—James Ward Smith and A. Leland Jamison—for having assumed so formidable a task in the first place. In addition to all the obstacles of consequence to which this review has referred, there was the pervasive difficulty of dealing with a phenomenon of American life which almost defies definition. Many of the sects and groups included in these pages bear little relationship to one another beyond the label of *religion*. Some of them more closely resemble at-

titudes or philosophies we are accustomed to consider anything but religious. The Humanist theist, for example, probably has more in common with such agnostic scientists as Julian Huxley or Harlow Shapley than with most of the persuasions incorporated in these volumes.

We are left with deep and penetrating questions of incalculable import. What really is religion in this latter half of the twentieth century and how is it to be distinguished from superstition? What is vestigial remnant of the past and where is the line which separates that from hopeful presage of the future? Until such ponderous issues as these have been resolved, we can only nibble away at the edges of religion in American life. And hope simultaneously that the 1831 prediction of Edgar Quinet, quoted in Daniel D. Williams' essay, may yet prove to be true: "A new idea of God will surge from the lakes of Florida and the peaks of the Andes; in America will begin a new religious era, and will be born a new idea of God."

FANTASY AND REALITY

By EUGENE GOODHEART

A NEW LIFE, by BERNARD MALAMUD. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, New York, 1961. 367 pp. \$4.95.

IN A RECENT ISSUE of *Commentary*, Philip Roth delivers a long complaint against "the American reality" from the point of view of the writer. "The American writer in the middle of the 20th century has his hands full in trying to understand, and then describe, and then make *credible* much of the American reality." Roth is understandably appalled by the extravagance of a culture that has produced Charles Van Doren, Roy Cohn, David Shine, Sherman Adams, Bernard Goldfine and Dwight David Eisenhower. He speaks ironically of the American reality as "a kind of embarrassment to

one's own meager imagination," and what he means, I suppose, is that the writer cannot expect from his world a center or poise that will make it possible for him to see his world whole. The point Roth is making has been made in a somewhat different form by Mary McCarthy in an article in which she examines the failure of the modern novelist to contain a whole society in his imagination.* The achievement of a Balzac or a Tolstoy no longer seems possible. The self enclosed discreteness of modern experiences has broken the chain of being which enabled the nineteenth century novelist to see the whole world (or nation) in the individual destiny. So that no contemporary writer seems able to produce, for instance, the resonance of the Tolstoyan sentence: "The previous history of Ivan Ilych was the simplest, the most ordinary and therefore the most terrible."

Bernard Malamud is an interesting case in point, for his novels and stories are especially moving in the modest and natural way in which they apparently open out from the local and temporal fact into the larger spaces of myth and history. Yet despite the reverberations and resonances of Malamud's fiction, one is still puzzled by what they signify. Has Malamud been able to find in the baseball player (*The Natural*) or the Jewish grocer (*The Assistant*) or the assorted characters that inhabit his short stories (see *The Magic Barrel and other stories*) successful instances of the American (let alone the human) destiny in its latest stage? Are the resonances of his fiction signs that Malamud has done what none of his contemporaries has been able to do: to sustain authentically in the immediate fact the imaginative power for those larger spaces of myth and history? Or are those resonances simply the product of extraordinary gifts of rhetoric and fantasy? *A New Life*, perhaps more than his earlier work, provokes these questions.

* Mary McCarthy, "The Fact in Fiction," *Partisan Review*, XVII (Summer, 1960), pp. 438-458.

THE HERO of Malamud's new novel is Seymour Levin, who arrives in the mythical western town of Marathon, Cascadia with suitcase and valise, an immigrant from an alcoholic life in New York City. With his wonderful ear for the Yiddish idiom, Malamud recalls the Yiddish immigrant tale. "Bearded, fatigued, lonely, Levin set down a valise and suitcase and looked around in a strange land for welcome." Levin is greeted at the station by Gerald Gilley, Director of Freshman Composition at Cascadia College where Levin will teach as an instructor in English, and Gilley's wife. Cascadia College, a science and technology school (much to Levin's dismay), is an obvious opportunity for the kind of satire on the academy that has become fashionable in recent years.

The main academic drama that is enacted is a rivalry for departmental chairmanship between C. D. Fabrikant, a somewhat dryasdust scholar with integrity, and Gilley, the amiable mediocrity, whose concern with the pleasure of the State Legislature far exceeds his concern with literature. The retiring chairman, Professor Fairchild, whose textbook *Elements of Grammar* is in its thirteenth edition, is one of those oppressive presences in American academic life, friendly to mediocrity and hostile to intellect, and yet redeemed by the complex ironic sympathy in which Malamud envelops him. His passion for grammar genuine, Professor Fairchild utters his dying words in Levin's arms, "the mysteries of the infinitive." Levin, one of the few friends of intellect at Cascadia, discovers what is by now merely a painful truism, that the life of the academy has little to do with either intellect or moral courage. The Fairchilds, the Gilleys, the Bullocks (George Bullock, a handsome athletic type has special sympathy for athletes, and together with the coaches steers his boys through gut-courses): they constitute the provincial academy.

Malamud is knowledgeable about American college life. He has caught perfectly the traditional speech of the departmental chairman (or the College President) at the beginning of the term,

welcoming a new faculty member whom he hopes will "enrich us from his experience in the East," or a returning faculty member who has completed his dissertation on *Piers Plowman*. ("The Ph.D. is our *conditio sine qua non*, and everyone who has not acquired the degree should be working for it, no matter how rigorous the course.") Malamud knows that a new instructor is likely to have an affair with one of his students and that the chances are good that he will have an affair with one of the faculty wives. He knows too that courage and genuineness are as rare in the academy as elsewhere in the world.

THE ULTIMATE EFFECT of Malamud's scenes of academic life, however, is neither satire nor sociology. The provincial academy, set in nature, the latest version of America's "manifest destiny," becomes the arena for a kind of Tolstoyan exploration of LIFE and the pursuit of happiness. It is certainly no accident that the hero's name is Levin, for like his namesake in *Anna Karenina*, he demands nothing less than the meaning of life and the full measure of human happiness. Clumsy in the social world (in his adventures and responses he resembles the Yiddish *schlemiel*), Malamud's Levin, like Tolstoy's, is a worshipper of nature.

The sight of the expectant earth raised a hunger in Levin's throat. He yearned for the return of spring, a terrifying habit he strongly resisted: the season was not yet officially autumn. He was now dead set against the destruction of un-lived time. As he walked, he enjoyed surprises of landscape: the variety of green, yellow, brown and black fields, compositions with distant trees, the poetry of perspective.

Like that of the elegy, the rhythm of *A New Life* is determined by the seasonal changes. And in "the open forest," Levin finds his fulfillment with Pauline Gilley, the wife of the Director of Freshman Composition. Malamud has done a rare thing in modern literature: he has

written a pastoral romance. His hero and heroine live in an earlier time of romantic hope, free of the corrosive modern cynicism about love. Neither the pain nor the absurdity can dim the glow of their expectation of renewal. In order to protect his romantic imagination from the eye of satire, Malamud has rejected the realistic mode. The fantastic complication of plot and event, the charmingly whimsical lyricism of style sustain the atmosphere of romance. Counterpointed to Fairchild's sterile musings on "the mysteries of the infinitive" are the conjugations of Levin and Pauline.

He hung his trousers over the branch of a fir. When he knelt she received him with outstretched arms, gently smoothed his beard, then embraced with passion as she fixed her rhythm to his.

He was throughout conscious of the marvel of it—in the open forest, nothing less, what triumph!

The little academic drama is complicated by Levin's affair with Pauline and by a strange, poignant memory which all the characters share of an irrepressibly rebellious Leo Duffy, Levin's predecessor, who was fired and subsequently committed suicide. Duffy is the specter from the East. Radical and explosive, he exemplifies the virtues of an earlier time: intellect, courage, erotic fulfillment. (And like Frank Alpine, the "assistant" of the earlier novel, Duffy is the kind of *goy* that serves Malamud's demonstration that all men are Jews.) Even after his death, his memory threatens the philistine repose of Cascadia's English faculty. The test of a character is his attitude toward Duffy, and most of the people in the novel fail the test. Fabrikant, who supported Duffy for a while, proves a last minute failure. Pauline, it turns out, was Duffy's soul-mate and she relives her love for Duffy in her affair with Levin. Levin, as expected, reenacts Duffy's career, is fired, but leaves his Arcadia with Pauline to renew his *Vita Nuova*.

What significance are we to find in

the little academic drama? If Duffy is the ghost to Levin's Hamlet, then it is clear that the bitter and tormented past that Levin is trying to forget must be bravely remembered and faced. Early in the novel, Levin tells Fabrikant that he has left New York, "seeking, you might say, my manifest destiny." Fabrikant replies:

This corner of the country was come upon by explorers searching for the mythical Northwest Passage, and it was opened by traders and trappers in their canoes trying to find the Great River of the West, the second Mississippi they had heard of. Then the settlers came, fighting the Indians, clearing the land, and building their homes out of their guts and bone... "There were giants in those days." Their descendants are playing a defensive game. Their great fear is that tomorrow will be different from today. I've never seen so many pygmies in my life.

The novel opens out from time to time to this kind of vision of the American past. The past is at once irony and possibility, for if the present appears filled with "so many pygmies" in the ironic light of the past, there is nevertheless the reminder of the possibility of renewal to anyone with the capacity and courage to remember.

THE UTOPIAN IMPULSE in *A New Life* is very strong, and it accounts for the pastoral romance, the extravagances of whimsy and plot. And how else could Malamud have saved the immediate fact from triviality and inconsequence, if he had not abandoned the realistic mode? The squalor of contemporary fact does come through when at moments Malamud adopts the naturalistic manner (e. g. Levin's introduction to the Gilley household), and we can then perceive graphically the plight of the contemporary novelist. It is as if the novelist has to work *against* reality, to perform through fantasy, pastoral dream and mythic recreation of the past the acts of

faith that make the celebration of life still possible. (Even in *The Assistant* in which the miserably gray life of the Jewish grocer is so *brilliantly* depicted, Malamud needs all the fantasy he can muster to elicit significance, and, indeed, one wonders whether for all his inventiveness, he has succeeded in realizing the full significance of his story. His stories sometimes fail to yield even when his fantasy works overtime as in "Lady of the Lake.") And it is for this reason that the novelist who chooses the mode of celebration and affirmation does not finally convince, for he expects us, despite the overwhelming presence of the actual, to believe in his fantasy. When Levin and Pauline drive off to their happiness, we read in disbelief. Having gazed at the immediate fact, Malamud, unlike the nineteenth century novelist, has found the absurd and the trivial, and has tried to redeem the fact through the *grace* of his art. For a moment we are enchanted by the gossamer loveliness of Malamud's dream, but when the actual world comes to us again, the dream becomes a kind of irony in our lives.

BELATED WISDOM

By HAL LEHRMAN

CONTEMPORARY ARAB POLITICS: A CONCISE HISTORY, by GEORGE E. KIRK. New York: Frederick A. Praeger. \$5. 231 pp.

SOMEWHERE, PERHAPS, finer mincemeat has been made of the Arab world's leaders and their American advocates—but never so authoritatively as in this "concise history" of "contemporary Arab politics" by British-born George E. Kirk.

Prof. Kirk, presently at Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, is an Arabist of formidable repute. He has to his academic credit an arm-long bibliography of standard works and other noted writings of scholarship. He now drops a large polemic bomb on the Arabs,

on their "provocative irresponsibility," their chronic "megalomania," "dupli-city" and "doubletalk."

The fall-out from the Kirk blast descends like a bag over the heads of such "gullible" defenders and apologists of Arab nationalism as the American Friends of the Middle East, the American press in general, American diplomats and American oil companies and, most of all, on the late Eisenhower Administration. Coming from a pundit once famously tolerant of Arab perspectives and ambitions, this uninhibited denunciamiento is almost as startling as a tract by Herbert Hoover on the iniquities of private enterprise.

Dr. Kirk, who has taught in Beirut and in Mandated Jerusalem, skips informally from dismal peak to peak in the Middle Eastern record of Western disaster during the past decade. He opens by inspecting some of the "myths" of ancient greatness which befuddle and beguile the contemporary Arab mind. (The Arabs claim as their very own, he observes, no less than Nebuchadnezzar, King Tut, Sargon and even Jesus, among others.) He then proceeds, sometimes raggedly but always with documented contempt, to stack these Arab pretensions against Arab performance. Despite the mischief they have made and the swollen size to which they have grown, he finds the Arab potentates and dictators, on the whole, to be "political dwarfs."

Gamal Abdel Nasser—whose much-trumpeted agrarian and other "reforms" he deflates with statistical zest—receives Prof. Kirk's special and furious attention: the President of the now-defunct United Arab Republic is a "moral featherweight," an accomplished whirling dervish in the Dance of Both Ends against the Middle. Nasser's chief competitor for regional upmanship, Baghdad's Abdel Kareem Kassim, gets off scarcely better. If Nasser has bravely promised his destitute people to *double* their per-capita national income in ten years, the author recalls, Kassim has riposted with a heroic pledge to make Iraq's abysmal living standard *the world's highest* in seven. Prof. Kirk gives

the same short shrift to the Lebanon turncoat politicians, the Cadillac-mounted dynasts of Saudi Arabia, the tin soldiers of Syria.

The book sounds a dour admonition to remember that "under-developed" countries like the Arab states are also likely to be "backward" countries—deficient in public responsibility and civic morality as well as in economic skills. Mindless foreign aid lavishly dumped upon such clients can breed corruption instead of crops and factories, we are warned. It is wryly noted, in the specific instance of Nasser, that recent American favors have in no way reduced Egyptian assaults on Washingtonian "imperialism" or liberated the Nile from its compulsion to twist and turn in foreign policy along a parallel to the Kremlin line.

IF ARAB STATESMEN are such "self-seeking pettifoggers," how have they succeeded nevertheless in confounding their presumably astute opposite numbers in the West? Dr. Kirk (a wartime intelligence officer with the British forces in the Middle East, and an area specialist for the Royal Institute of International Affairs at London's Chatham House) supplies a blunt answer: Britain's shrinkage in the Middle East—derived mainly from an Anglo-American "Great Divorce" in the area, arranged by Presidents Truman and Eisenhower—left a "power vacuum" which the White House

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and State Department failed to fill or even perceive.

To prove the point, the author rehearses in minute detail the winsome chronicle of Western disunity toward Nasser's grab of Suez and toward the subsequent Sinai invasion. As Dr. Kirk tells it, leaning on the Eden Memoirs and other intimate sources, Nasser was rescued (and magnified) by Eisenhower-Dulles "pharisaism," by Washington's fabulous inability to fathom the facts of Arab life, and by American "sabotage" of a reasoned and moral Anglo-French effort to expose the Egyptian dictator's clay feet and rid the free world of him for good. In the same vein, the book examines the "strain" placed on Anglo-American relations by the notorious Buraimi Oasis affair and the allegedly dubious role there of the Arabian-American Oil Company.

Rather engagingly, Dr. Kirk concedes from the outset that his account may be "prejudiced, overstated, tendentious." He invites critics to take bold issue. Well, the Kirk cart is impressively laden, and this reviewer would not presume to try up-

setting it. Yet several omissions should be noted if we are really reaching for the bottom of Western failure in the Middle East.

Prof. Kirk whitewashes Britain clean, except for the Labor Party and its "fading red tie." One would never guess that Albion too had a share in nursing Arab dreams of glory. The only virtuous Arabs are Britain's Arabs, it appears—Faisal and Nuri Said of Iraq, and Jordan's young Hussein. "Zionism," although its spokesmen in Israel and Palestine long ago forecast what the author shouts robustly today about the folly of appeasing the Arabs, continues to be the traditional villain for Prof. Kirk, and is dragged in for dishonorable mention on every non-occasion.

Finally, Prof. Kirk whitewashes himself. Nowhere in his text will a reader find the smallest *mea culpa*, any hint at all that the author and other Middle Eastern hands like him, however disillusioned and wiser now, were themselves once trusting aiders and abettors of Arab nationalism—thus contributing their significant mite to our present legacy.

BOOK REVIEWERS AND CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

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RECENT BOOKS OF JEWISH INTEREST

CHILDREN OF THE GILDED GHETTO, by JUDITH R. KRAMER and SEYMOUR LEVANTMAN, Yale University Press. A sociological study of three generations of American Jews in a typical American city. Analyzes the conflicts between the values of the third generation (of the title) which are increasingly those of the Gentile majority, and their minority affiliation and identity.

SCIENCE AND THE NEW NATIONS, edited by RUTH GRUBER, Basic Books. The proceedings of the International Conference on Science in the Advancement of New States, held at the Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovoth, Israel, in August 1960.

ALIYAH: THE PEOPLES OF ISRAEL, by HOWARD MORLEY SACHAR, World Publishing Company. Fifteen biographical portraits of men and women who settled in Palestine before 1948. Each person is representative of a different wave of immigration, and each approached the the problems of adjustment in his own way.

A FAITH FOR MODERNS, by ROBERT GORDIS, Bloch Publishing Company. Sets forth in non-technical language and in a non-sectarian spirit, the basic elements of a religious view of life that will be tenable for modern men, regardless of formal religious affiliation.

THE JEW IN A GENTILE WORLD, edited by ARNOLD A. ROGOW, The Macmillan Company. Influential writings since the Fifth Century B.C.E. by non-Jews about Jews. Introduction by C. P. Snow, Epilogue by Harold D. Lasswell.

THE NEW GERMANY AND THE OLD NAZIS, by T. H. TETENS, Random House. Another in a recent wave of books having as their thesis the eminence of former Nazis in contemporary German life, with documentation of resurgences of Nazism and anti-Semitism in Germany today.

THE SPINOZA OF MARKET STREET, by I. BASHEVIS SINGER, Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. A collection of short stories by this eminent contemporary Yiddish writer, some of which are previously unpublished.

SIBERIA, by ABRAHAM SUTZKEVER, Abelard-Schuman. In this poem the author evokes the Siberia of his childhood. Drawings by Marc Chagall.

JUDAISM, edited by ARTHUR HERTZBERG, George Braziller. One of a six-volume series on "Great Religions of Modern Man" under the general editorship of Richard Z. Gard of Yale, dealing with the major religions, their meaning, traditions and contemporary significance.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN ISRAEL, by OSCAR KRAINES, Houghton Mifflin Company. A comprehensive analysis of Israel political life: origin and history of the state, judicial system, political parties; the structure of the government at national and local levels, church-state relations and Israel's position in world affairs.

JEWISH ART, edited by CECIL ROTH, McGraw Hill. A complete history of Jewish art from the 2nd millennium B.C.E. to the present day. Illustrated.

MAN'S BEST HOPE, by ROLAND B. GITTLESOHN, Random House. The author contends that religion and science must be combined.

THE WRITINGS OF NACHMAN KROCHMAL, edited by SIMON RAWIDOWICZ, Ararat Publishing Society, London. The new edition of this Hebrew classic which has been out of print for over 30 years, contains all the writings of Krochmal and a 225 page introduction by Professor Rawidowicz.

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A QUARTERLY JEWISH REVIEW

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